

MINOR MORALS,

INTERSPERSED WITH SKETCHES OF

NATURAL HISTORY,

HISTORICAL ANECDOTES,

AND

ORIGINAL STORIES,

BY

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MINOR MORALS,

AND

SKETCHES OF NATURAL HISTORY.

FANNY, MARY, and LOUISA, returning from a Walk with their Two Brothers, they enter the Room where SOPHIA is at Work.

Sophia.

YOU are late, methinks, this evening.

Lionel. Oh! yes, we have met with some adventures; and then Louisa became so tired at last, that I thought
Julius

2 SLIGHT HISTORICAL ETCHINGS.

Julius and I must have brought her home in our arms.

Sophia. And pray what were your adventures?

Julius. Why, the first was, that we met a drove of oxen, and the girls were in a fright, and so we got over into a field to escape from them.

(*Mrs. Belmour entering.*) Oh! I am glad to see you returned, my children! I was afraid you would carry my little girl here too far. What detained you so late?

Julius. I was just telling Sophia, madam, that first we met I dare say a thousand oxen in droves, with men with them, who, I understood, were Welchmen, and they made a strange hooting noise such as I never heard before. My sisters were afraid of the cattle; so we clambered over hedge
and

and ditch to get out of their way, and by that means lost ourselves.

Mrs. Belmour. Those cattle are very inoffensive: you need not have been afraid of them. They are bred in Wales in vast numbers, and sent from thence when they are old enough, to be fattened in our rich pastures. They are generally too much tired, poor things, to have any desire to run at people.

Fanny. But so are oxen in the streets of London; and yet you very often hear of their hurting passengers.

Mrs. Belmour. Because they are overdriven and hunted into a fever by the cruel monsters that conduct them, for whom, surely, there ought to be some severe punishment, as nothing is more disgraceful to human nature. If animals are given us by Providence for our support, it is our

duty to take their lives in the easiest way, and by no means to make them suffer.

Julius. I am sure I would not be a butcher for the world.

Lionel. Nor I; I am sure I could starve first.

Mrs. Belmour. Habit reconciles people to fights and acts of cruelty. A child brought up to see cattle driven daily to the slaughter-house, and the kennels of his father's court adjoining to it streaming with blood, acquires, as he grows up, no other idea but of the limbs and heads he afterwards beholds weighed and sold. Of the animal as an existing and suffering creature, he has probably no notion at all. Well, and after you escaped from this horned multitude what did you do?

Lionel. We were detained then by
a much

a much prettier fight; for, rambling through fields and over the meadows on the left, we got at last to the foot-bridge, and then I knew my way; and we came into the turnpike-road, where we saw a whole regiment of horse-foldiers just come from a review. I like to see them so! Such nice, smart-looking men, and such beautiful horses! I'm sure I wish papa would do as he said he would once; and, when I am big enough, make me a captain of light-horse.

Mrs. Belmour. Yet you would not be a butcher for all the world? You would rather starve?

Lionel. Yes, to be sure; but being a foldier is not at all like that.

Mrs. Belmour. Only so far as a butcher earns his bread by killing animals for the food of his fellow men;

and a foldier procures his by killing the men themselves.

Lionel. Dear Aunt! As if a captain was at all like a nasty greasy butcher!

Mrs. Belmour. And which could we best do without?

Fanny. Why, the butcher: for, if we had no mutton and beef, we could live upon bread and rice, and pies and puddings, and fruit; but if there were no officers nor soldiers, the enemies of England would come and kill us all.

Mrs. Belmour. But is it necessary for England to have enemies?

Julius. They say the French are our natural enemies.

Mrs. Belmour. And what does that mean? What is a natural enemy?

Julius. An enemy, I suppose, that Nature has made.

Mrs.

Mrs. Belmour. By Nature, you mean God. So then it seems that God made different countries, and caused the men inhabiting those countries to speak different languages, only that they might have pretences to destroy and murder each other! No: when the great Author of the Universe placed his reasoning creatures in various climates, where the productions of the earth are different, he certainly did not intend to say to the European, "Go now and subdue the other quarters of the globe, and cause their inhabitants to work for your gratification." Nor could the Omnipotent implant in the inhabitants of two divisions of the earth parted from each other only by a few leagues of water, or some high mountains, a *natural* antipathy, so that, from mere hatred and detestation of each other,

the study of whole generations of these men should be mutual annoyance, and their whole ambition to sweep each other from the earth. It is much more reasonable to suppose, that God, when he gave to man reason and forethought, when he bestowed on him memory and reflection, denied to the other animals, intended to give him also a superior degree of happiness. And certainly nothing is so contrary to that scheme of benevolence, as the systematic hatred which we are brought up to entertain for our fellow-creatures. Yet is such a system not only continued in despite of common sense, but is made one of the motives by which men are induced to enter into associations called armies, whose business it is, under the notions of honour and glory, to maim and kill other men, formed on their side into
the

the same sort of associations, on the same principles, who, in fact, are hired to kill and be killed. We may call it what we will, but, reduced to plain sense, that is the real truth.

Julius. But, my dear madam, if we were not to have soldiers, we must soon be conquered by other nations who have. And as long as there must be armies, surely it is an honorable thing to defend one's country.

Mrs. Belmour. Certainly very honorable, and what is every man's duty. It is not being of the profession of a soldier, such as the present circumstances of the world of necessity create, that I blame in any man. It is, as things unfortunately are, necessary, and I know no set of men more generally respectable; but it is the prejudices, the impositions, which have created that necessity, that I abhor.

It is the certainty that governments take advantage of even the virtues of the people to make them the tools of ambition ; and, instead of a defender of his native land, I am apt to consider a soldier as one whose life is sold to do or to suffer evil, not because he chooses it, but because it is the custom of his country. And I cannot but think how much happier, and more really useful, such a man would be, if occupied in the culture of the earth, or in elevating the existence of its inhabitants by the arts that polish life, and give dignity to human nature. I do not say, that, as society is at present constituted, we could do without soldiers ; but I hope that an habit of reasoning and of reflecting will conquer this prejudice, as it has done to many others ; and man will discover that ferocity is not bravery, nor inflicting

flicting wounds and misery on others the way to secure his own happiness.

Julius. But, my dear Aunt, remember what fine fellows the Romans were, and how great we are always taught to consider them!

Mrs. Belmour. They were great, in the truest sense of the word, while they fought and died for their country during the early ages of the Republic; but when the warlike power they acquired in that contest was turned to the acquisition of remote conquest, you see that luxury, and the pride which was the consequence of boundless success, very soon changed the national character. Great armies were necessary to a government who possessed almost all the then known world. These armies, from conquering the most distant provinces, became unquiet when they were not employed,
and

and the Consuls found their own safety endangered if they did not lead them forth to new victories. The army, in fact, possessed all the power, and the empire soon became at the disposal of him who knew best how to obtain the affection of the legions. Cæsar, who was certainly one of the greatest men that ever lived, united all the talents that were calculated to change the form of government from a Republic into a despotic Monarchy; but a passion for their former liberty glowed in the breasts of a few illustrious men, and Cæsar, you know, was stabbed in the Capitol by Brutus, Cassius, Cinna, and some other noble Romans. The mischief, however, was too deeply rooted. Anthony, a profligate and worthless man, contrived to avenge the death of his friend and patron, Cæsar, and afterwards agreed with

Octavius (the nephew of the first Cæsar) and Lepidus to divide the Roman Empire into three parts, of which each was to govern one; and this is what is called the Triumvirate. But Anthony, entangled by the art of Cleopatra the celebrated Queen of Egypt, and become contemptible through his own vices, soon perished in ignominy; Lepidus was too insignificant to make any resistance against the growing power of Octavius Cæsar, and he soon possessed himself of the Empire. The Republic then ceased to exist, and a long succession of Imperators or Emperors followed, of whom, with only four or five exceptions, it is not too harsh to say, that they were so infamous, they so far exceeded in the most hideous vices all that had preceded or have *succeeded* them (if we except, I think, three or
four

four instances), that they seem to have been chosen to show how ill man is calculated to be intrusted with unlimited power.

Julius. But pray tell me how it happens that we find curiosities now in England, and see antiquities in people's cabinets, that they say are Roman.

Mrs. Belmour. Because this island, except the mountainous parts of Wales and the highlands of Scotland, was once under the dominion of the Romans.

Lionel. What, did they conquer us?

Mrs. Belmour. Even so.

Lionel. I'm sure I've heard people say that England never was conquered, and that the English never were beat.

Mrs.

Mrs. Belmour. Whoever told you so, were certainly better patriots than historians.

Julius. I should like to be informed of the truth of all those assertions, but at school one is laughed at if one goes to read out of school hours. I began the History of England, and was reading it through; but I don't know how it was, we got a new scheme of play among us, and they would have quizzed me to death, if I had remained in my room to read; and since that, I have never thought about it.

Mrs. Belmour. My dear Julius, I am sorry to say that you will be ignorant as long as you live, if you do not get the better of that false shame which makes you afraid of being quizzed as you call it. It is by such

feebleness of mind that we are led at all ages to sacrifice our own opinions, and even pleasures, to the whims of others, often of people about whom we care nothing. I have known more young men ruined by that unhappy sort of pride, than by any naturally bad propensities of their own. Well! since you should like to know, and yet have been so simply laughed out of informing yourself, I will tell you. The first accounts we have of these islands were those given to the Romans by their merchants, who, wandering about the seas for the purposes of commerce, seem to have landed in Cornwall, and to have purchased tin, which that country produces*. They gave, however, a very dreadful ac-

* This is abridged from Hume.

count of the ferocity of the Islanders, though the south-eastern part of the island had already made some advances in the arts of civilized life, and was become extremely populous. The other quarters of the country were then inhabited by wandering hordes of savages, who lived on the milk and flesh, and were clothed with the skins, of their cattle.

Julius. But, my dear madam, if England was an island, how could the inhabitants get thither? They must have known the invention of boats?

Mrs. Belmour. There you puzzle me, Julius. I know no more how these our islands were peopled, than how any other part of the world was first stocked with inhabitants. My information indeed says, that the island called Britain was peopled from Gaul,

as that part of the Continent was then named which we now call France:—so you see we can trace our origin no farther than to the people we despise and hate. There is a remote tradition, which tells that this island (so little a while since esteemed the mistress of the world) was, by some violent concussion of the earth, severed from the Continent, and it must have been precisely from France. There are fanciful people who imagine that vestiges still remain of this fact in the disposition of the rocks of the opposite shores, and say, that there is a chalk bed between Dover and Calais, which seems a sort of continuation of the Downs on either coast. I own I did not discover the resemblance of the soil on the margins of the two kingdoms. Collins the Poet touches
on

on this ideal union, in his Ode to Liberty :

The Gaul, 'tis held of antient story,

Saw Britain link'd to his now adverse strand :
No sea between, nor cliff sublime and hoary,
He pass'd with unwet feet thro' all our land.

However that tradition might or might not be true ; certain it is, that the manners and religion of the Britons, or Britains, were the same as those of their Gallic neighbours. They were almost naked, living in huts or caves ; and even when they became a little more accustomed to something like civilized society, they still led a sort of wandering life, divided into small tribes, and their sole property was their sword and their cattle. The Druids, their priests, had great authority among them, and kept them in awe by subjugating them to super-

stitious ceremonies. They practised these ceremonies in dark woods, or deep and rocky recesses; and they frequently offered up human victims to their imaginary God Thor. *No idolatrous worship ever obtained such an ascendant over mankind as that of the antient Gauls and Britons**. And in this state they were found by Cæsar, who, having made himself master of Gaul, had a curiosity to explore the island which could be distinguished from its coast. He is believed to have landed at Deal, in Kent. The Britons, however, who were by no means able to defend themselves against him, agreed to pay a tribute in testimony of their submission. But forgetting the danger when the Roman troops were withdrawn, they neglected to

* Hume.

perform what he had demanded; and Cæsar, irritated by their failure, landed in great force, I believe, on the coast of Hampshire, and, crossing the Thames, took and burned the capital of Cassivelaunus, one of their Princes, under whose command they had associated to oppose the victorious Roman; who, after having extorted new submissions, returned into Gaul. And this was the first conquest of England, which afterwards remained free from the Roman yoke, or feeling it but little, for almost an hundred years.

But Cæsar's conquest, unlike the generality of those unjust incursions, was probably of very great use to the conquered people. The Romans brought us arts, while they made us feel the weight of their arms. Then first the inhabitants of Britain began
to

to emerge from a state which can be considered as little better than that in which we have since seen the wild inhabitants of the northern division of America.

Lionel. Then Cæsar's wars were not so wicked as you say wars are now?

Mrs. Belmour. Just as wicked in their purpose; though the event proved, but not till after much bloodshed and misery, and till many generations had passed away, that good is sometimes the consequence of evil. Another day I will endeavour to give you some idea of the decline of the Romans from being masters of the world to the lowest state of degradation; and we will take another occasion to go slightly over our own history—not that I pretend in these light sketches to satisfy your curiosity, I only mean

mean to excite it. It is necessary that every body should know the principal events that have happened in their own country: without some such information, they cannot so well judge of what is passing before their eyes, and are continually making mistakes, as well as is liable to receive false impressions. I do not think the study of history so pleasant as it is useful; but no one can pretend to be well educated who has not a general knowledge of it. It can hardly be dispensed with as a part of female education; but every man should be well informed, not merely in that of his own country, but he should know the antient as well as present situation of the various states of Europe, and Asia, where originally was the seat of empire.—Besides that it is requisite as an accomplishment, such knowledge may serve many

many other good purposes. It abates our pride, I think, when we know that other nations greater and more powerful than ours have flourished and faded; and we may learn, when we see that no great people ever retained their greatness after they had lost their liberty, to guard *that* which alone has made this little island the first maritime power in the world; which, by protecting her commerce, would have given her all the blessings enjoyed by every region of the earth; and, were it not for wars, which commerce is too apt to produce, might have rendered her the happiest country under Heaven, and a mediatrix and peace-maker among the other nations.

Sophia. But I have heard, Aunt, that there are other countries much finer than England.

Mrs.

Mrs. Belmour. Undoubtedly many enjoy a finer climate. France, for example, has almost all the geographical advantages of England, and many that England cannot boast. Her northern provinces produce corn, fruits, and cattle, as abundantly as England; in the south, she is rich in "*wine that gladdeth the heart of man,*" "*and oil that causeth his face to shine.*" I believe the air more healthy than England; and to that, as well as the great extent of the country, is to be imputed the immense advantage that country has over ours in point of numbers. In all cold countries like ours, the poor suffer most dreadfully in winter. Every part of France is not exempt from a great degree of cold: but, south of Paris, the poor endure but little inconvenience from the change of season, and their food is
certainly

certainly wholesomer than that eaten by the lower classes with us. We have been taught to believe that the peasants danced, though in wooden shoes and without shirts, to keep themselves from reflecting on their hunger; but much of all that never was true.—To return, however, to the subject from whence this discourse arose, I am persuaded that, if instead of tearing each other to pieces during these five hundred years, we had on both sides had the sense to make the most of our advantages; if we had exchanged our commodities, and cultivated our fields, and our reason, instead of having manured the fields of both countries, and of America, and even Africa and Asia, with blood, we might now all have danced, or have been happy enough to have done so, and many millions of people would have

have been in the world who have fallen in the field, or died the miserable victims of war, to gratify the ambition of a few, who call themselves great politicians, and prove it by thinning the world.

I recollect, I think, a stanza of Thomson's in that enchanting poem "The Castle of Indolence," which may conclude our discourse on this subject :

But what most shew'd the vanity of life,
Was to behold the nations all on fire,
In cruel broils engag'd and deadly strife :
Most christian kings, inflam'd with black desire,
With honorable ruffians in their hire,
Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour :
Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
They sit them down just where they were before,
Till for new scenes of woe peace shall their force
 restore.

DIALOGUE II.

The Six Children prepared to walk with their
Aunt.

Mrs. Belmour.

YOU know we are to have a long walk to-night, which way shall we go?

Lionel. Oh! I will shew you a pleasant walk: over the heath, and up across the mount where the fir-trees are planted, there is the prettiest view you ever saw over the park.

Mrs. Belmour. Well, we will go thither: the beauty of the year will soon be on the decline; many of the birds have already ceased to sing, and many of the most beautiful flowers are gone. After Midsummer, the
freshness

freshness and delightful verdure of the landscape is faded even in this country. In the more southern climates of Europe, the heat much sooner destroys the brilliant verdure of summer. In Italy, the cigala, a sort of cricket, devours the leaves almost on their first appearance; and, generally speaking, there is no country which is so green throughout the year as England.

Sophia. A common is a very ugly thing. Why don't they plant it with trees, and sow it with wheat?

Mrs. Belmour. Because much of such kind of ground is naturally barren, and was neglected by the first appropriators of the soil as not worth cultivating, and because many of these rude places afford subsistence to the poor. The produce besides, however rough it looks, is useful in many
D 2 respects.

respects. The furze* or gorse, which bears a yellow blossom, and makes a common or heath look so brilliant in spring and the greater part of summer, serves sometimes for food for cattle, by being ground in a mill, or cut small, to destroy the effects of its thorns. It is put up in stacks, and makes fuel for the lime-kilns, and it serves as an harbour to game. The grass of these wild extents of land serves to pasture a great number of sheep; and in some places the poor are allowed to keep cows upon them, and in others to rear geese. The plant too which we call heath†, that bears those small purple bells which make this kind of country look purple when it is in bloom, serves to burn; and in the mountains of Scotland, the Highlanders thatch their houses and make

* Ulex.

† Erica vulgaris.

their

their beds with it. Another produce besides is camomile*, which grows in great plenty on dry commons, and is thence taken in its greatest perfection for medicinal uses; and here the midnight mushroom often rises, as if really planted by one of Titania's followers, or Ariel's companions. Let us recollect quotations alluding to commons and heaths :

The common overgrown with fern, and rough
With prickly gorse, that, shapeless and deform,
And dangerous to the touch, has yet its bloom,
And decks itself with ornaments of gold,
Yields no unpleasing ramble: there the turf
Smells fresh; and, rich in odoriferous herbs,
And fungous fruits of earth, regales the sense
With luxury of unexpected sweets.

On these wilds, too, Shakespeare often lays his scene. On a heath, near Fores in Scotland, the Witches,

* *Anthemis nobilis.*

† Cowper.

or Weird Sisters, met Macbeth, and saluted him with the prophecy which so fatally roused his ambition, and bade him aspire to a throne which he waded through seas of blood to obtain.

The practice of burning fern*, the ashes of which are used in bleaching flax, is thus described in a later poem called "Walks in a Forest," in which some of the lines intended to paint scenery are well written.

The poet speaks of great heat, and goes on to say—

Yet cannot heat's meridian rage deter
The cottage matron from her annual toil.
On that rough bank behold her, bent to reap
The full-grown fern, her harvest, and prepare
Her ashy balls of purifying fame.
Lo! yon bare spot she destines for the hearth,
Now strikes the steel, the tinder covers light
With wither'd leaves and dry: now stoops to fan
The glimmering sparks, and motionless remains,
Watching

* Filix.

Watching the infant flame from side to side
Run thro' the thin materials. Round her stray,
Children or grand-children, a cheerful train
Dispersed among the bushes; earnest each
To execute the task her nod assigns.

The poem then proceeds to relate how the fire, thus lighted, has not unfrequently, in hot and dry summers, extended itself to the woods, and occasioned the most alarming conflagration through a whole country.

Besides the use to which fern is put for bleaching flax with its ashes, it is cut and dried in stacks for the litter of cattle; and the inhabitants of some of the newly-discovered islands in the South Sea, who know not the arts of cultivating any kind of grain or roots, make a sort of bread of the roots of fern, especially during a time of scarcity, which often happens among savages who live by fishing and hunting.

Well,

Well, now we have reached the summit of the hill ; the prospect from hence is, indeed, beautiful. Nothing surely shews the triumph of art and industry more than the park, whose green and turfy inequalities are spread before us. It is not a great many years since this tract of land was reclaimed from the waste, and now you see it is covered with the finest grass, shadowed with trees, and filled with deer and sheep. The owner of it you know is a nobleman, who delights in adorning it, not merely to gratify himself, but because he employs a great number of workmen, who all live in a degree of comfort in cottages which he has built for them, and which you see at a little distance, forming no unpleasing object. Were all men of high rank to resemble him, there would be very little complaint
of

of the inequality of conditions, since in every society some must be more at ease than others. Do you observe that high building on the left? Our next ramble shall be thither. In it are several instruments provided for the purpose of astronomical observations, and all the best books on that subject. An ingenious man who lives in the house has that apartment allotted to his studies, and the young people of the family attend to receive lectures in that sublime science, when in fine and clear evenings the heavenly bodies are most visible. Perhaps I may obtain leave to have you admitted to these lectures.

Sophia. I read the other day that all the planets are inhabited.

Mrs. Belmour. They may be so, for aught we know; the same Omnipotent Being who fitted us for this globe,

globe, may have created other creatures to whose natures the other planets may be adapted. This thought ought never to occur to us without bringing with it a lesson to our vanity. If the planets only are peopled, to say nothing of the myriads of millions of stars which we see only in our horizon, how paltry and how poor ought to appear the little pursuits and passions which agitate us, and which we appear to think of consequence enough to interest the whole universe! I often smile when I see a good man giving his opinion with a magisterial air, and telling us that, though we do not attend to him, he is sure the whole world will one day bear witness to the truth of his prediction; or the soundness of his advice; when, perhaps, he was never heard of, nor ever will be, beyond his own parish,

parish, or one or two in the neighbourhood. Sometimes too a good lady is in great uneasiness that the world will say so and so; that world which knows not that she exists. However, it is well that people are of consequence to themselves, since it serves to keep their lives from stagnation; but I have always thought the study of astronomy gave more effectual lessons of humility than are elsewhere to be learned.

Now we will cross into the park, and admire the beauty and variety of the trees, which, though not, like those of forests, the growth of ages, are yet most agreeable objects. The oak, which is the most majestic and the best timber, has, you see, all the appearance of rugged strength. The form of the leaf is elegant, and, on the acorns, the fruit of this tree, it is said,
our

our ancestors, the original inhabitants of this island, lived, before they possessed the flocks and herds which afterwards became their support. Now amidst the variety of grain, fruit, and vegetables, with which cultivation has clothed our fields and gardens, it is difficult to imagine that this harsh and unpalatable nut could ever be eaten.

The ash is next in merit to the oak. How beautifully light is its foliage, and how graceful the curvature of its branches! Of the wood of this tree are made ploughs, carts, and all instruments of husbandry. The elm is darker in its foliage. Those groups which you see on the left, looking almost as black as firs, are elms; and the trees in the neighbourhood of London which are stripped up till they have rather the appearance of
brooms

brooms stuck in the ground than trees, are also this sort. They are useful not only to supply fuel by their side branches, but to make the pipes through which water is conveyed, and for the drains which are requisite in a great city, because these trees are easily hollowed for those purposes. The beech, which I think the most beautiful of all, is of less value, though it supplies wedges used in ship-building, and the greater part of the wood used by turners. Nothing surely is more delicious than those beech-woods which feather with their beautiful flowing foliage the sides of downs, and flourish on chalky soils. When I was a girl, I used to wander among them, gathering the wild raspberries and strawberries with which they abound; and being compelled to quit those delightful scenes

for the confinement of a boarding-school in the neighbourhood of London, I have wished myself transformed into a squirrel, that I might live amidst these delightful shades, and bound from bough to bough, finding my food in the beech-nuts, and my shelter among the leaves.

Mary. Oh! I am sure it is exactly the wish I should have too. Squirrels are such pretty nimble creatures, with such bright black eyes, and little tufted sharp ears!

Mrs. Belmour. And yet how weak and puerile was my regret; and how useless and contemptible a figure should I have made now, had I wasted those precious hours of youth in such a mode of life as could have qualified me for nothing better than a companion to a poor wood-cutter!

Mary. Oh! but if it were possible
that

that a person could be changed into any animal, though I do not mean to say that the wish is a wise one, the form of a squirrel would be preferable to that of a bird, since it does not seem to be persecuted by the boys, as birds are.

Mrs. Belmour. Alas! my dear Mary, you are mistaken. The active cruelty of man spares not any animal of the creation; and even those which are harmless, and contribute nothing to his wants as affording food, are not free from his inhumanity. These poor little inoffensive inhabitants of the woods are objects of chase to idle men and boys, who either shoot them, or throw at them sticks loaded with lead at each end, which generally bring them bleeding and with broken limbs to the ground.

Sophia. How barbarous!

Mrs. Belmour. Not more so than the wanton cruelty with which birds are destroyed, and their nests taken, to no possible use or profit ; for there are very few of their tribes that do any injury to the farmer or gardener. But we lament these ravages in vain ; let us go on with our little history of trees.

That rich and beautiful clump of high trees are chesnuts ; and you, Sophia, may observe that their foliage resembles what you have seen in Italian paintings, and the drawings of Claude le Lorraine, quite unlike that of any other tree. This beautiful vegetable not only affords very valuable timber, and is highly ornamental, but is almost the staple support of the inhabitants of the southern parts of Europe, who make a sort of bread of the nuts, or eat them as we do potatoes

toes and other esculent roots. It is called *Castanea* from *Castana*, a city of Thessaly, from which it was supposed to have been brought into Italy; but it is probably a native of Spain, Italy and Sicily, since it grows to such an immense size in those countries. In that part of Mount Etna called the *Sylvosa*, or woody region, where the mountain is encircled with a zone of the most luxurious forests, there is one of these trees which is called *Castanea di cento cavalli*, the chestnut-tree of an hundred horse, because such is the extent of its trunk, now hollowed by time, that an hundred horses and their riders might find shelter within it. Here, however, in our more northern region, it never attains any thing like such a size. The horse-chestnut, another species of tree, is of a more rapid

growth; and its verdure, as well as the beauty of its flowers, renders it a great favourite in our plantations. The tufted trees of that shady row are horse-chefnuts. Their fine verdure, however, is now gone; but in May, when they are covered with spikes of flowers, white, elegantly shaded with red, which fades into yellow, there is hardly any object more lovely among all the vegetable beauties.

The birch, whose name, from the tyranny of which it is an instrument, is not so much esteemed as it deserves, is a very elegant tree; and there is one sort with long pliant boughs, which rivals or even surpasses, in the flexile flow of its drooping branches, the weeping-willow. Numberless other trees are collected to form the different and extensive
plantations

plantations which we see on either hand. That on the right surrounds a lake, into which a small river disembogues itself, whose progress, even where you cannot see the water, you may now mark by the blue mist rising from it, as you may trace from the same circumstance the form and boundaries of the lake itself. The fallow, the willow, and the alder, are among the more immediate shades that crowd over it; while opposite, on the higher ground, you see the family of firs, pines, and larches, which here aspire almost to the grandeur of Norwegian forests, and throw off by the contrast of their dark boughs the landscape that opens beyond them, lighted up as it is by the bright beams of the setting sun.

But the dews will soon fall heavily;
and even now the hour is at hand,
which

which is so sweetly described by one of our favourite poets in his Ode to Evening. Perhaps one of you may recollect the lines ; I mean Collins.

Julius. I can, I believe ; for I was so delighted with it when I read it anew a few days since, that I wrote it in a book, where I collect such small pieces of poetry as please me best. I do not pretend, however, to repeat the whole ; but I recollect some stanzas more particularly, because I once tried to turn them all into Latin, and I remember best those in which I succeeded. That where ruins are described was one of them.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or

Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
 Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
 That from the mountain's side
 Views wilds, and swelling floods,
 And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires,
 And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
 Thy dewy fingers draw
 The gradual dusky veil.

Mrs. Belmour. Which is exactly
 what we see at this moment. I re-
 collect too some other stanzas on the
 same subject, by a poet still living*,
 hardly inferior to these favourite lines
 of Collins's: I do not recollect them
 all, but they end with these lines:

Now every passion sleeps; desponding love,
 And pining envy: ever restless pride:
 An holy calm creeps o'er my peaceful soul,
 Anger and mad ambition's storms subside.

Oh modest Evening! let me oft appear
 A wandering votary in thy pensive train,
 Listening to every wildly warbled note,
 That fills with farewell sweet thy dark'ning plain.

* Dr. Joseph Warton.

But

But we must now hasten home, my children, though I have not exhausted half the subjects that offer themselves in a walk so various as this. We will therefore take another occasion to visit the park; and, to give more variety to our inquiries, we will go to it by another road.

DIALOGUE III.

LIONEL entering the Room where Mrs. BELMOUR and his Four Sisters are at work.—
JULIUS drawing in another part of it.

Lionel.

WELL, Aunt, you will not accuse me of idleness now, I hope?

Mrs. Belmour. I hope I shall not have occasion to do it. You have been well employed then since seven this morning?

Lionel. Yes, that I have.

Mary. Tell us how, my dear Lionel.

Lionel. Why, I have been at work the whole time. First of all, I went
out

out meaning only to have an early walk, and as I crossed the common I saw those children that you sometimes speak to, picking up something. I asked what they were doing? and they said, Looking for mushrooms, which their mother sells to Sir Walter Wenman's housekeeper. I set about helping them; and we presently got as many very nice ones as will sell, they say, for four shillings at least.

Mrs. Belmour. You were certainly charitably employed.

Lionel. Then afterwards I went to help the farmer's men, and assisted them to get in three loads of wheat; for they said they were in a great hurry, and were afraid it would rain.

Mrs. Belmour. Well, that was better than being idle, certainly, though I do not imagine your work was of any great utility. I like the beginning of
your

your morning better; for the persons of that family are so industrious, that it is a great satisfaction to assist them. I have not been there very lately, but I like to converse with the good woman, and perhaps we may this evening visit their cottage.

Julius. And I will go, if you will give me leave, to see the ruin again from which I made this drawing.

Mrs. Belmour. Do so. It seems to me that your present progress well deserves that you should attend to its being correctly finished.

Fanny. I don't understand why these buildings are in ruins now, which there seems to have been a great deal of pains taken once to build up.

Mrs. Belmour. A little recollection of what you have read of history, would, I should imagine, explain it.

Sophia. Fanny affects to forget

VOL. II.

F

every

every thing. I suppose she will be like Mrs. Jasperine, who is so very fine a lady, that she cannot take the trouble to know any thing, and says it is very vulgar to have all sorts of old stories at hand, like a teacher or a governess.

Mrs. Belmour. I do not much approve of your remark, Sophia: there is in it more of malice, I fear, than of friendship. Why should you compare your sister Fanny to a woman whose pride and ignorance are, among her acquaintance, almost proverbial?

Sophia. Oh! Fanny does not think it any affront, I assure you; Mrs. Jasperine is one of her great favourites. She has said very often that she was a very agreeable woman, always dressed better than any body, and had so much taste, it was quite charming to see the pretty things she had about her.

Fanny.

Fanny. One may have an opinion, I suppose?

Mrs. Belmour. Certainly; and if the opinion be erroneous, it would be more becoming in your sister to point out with good nature the reason why it appears so, than to blame you for entertaining it.

Sophia (visibly mortified). It is not difficult to know, however, why Mrs. Jasperine is thought so agreeable by Fanny.

Fanny (with asperity). No; nor is it difficult to know why you cannot endure her.

Mrs. Belmour. So! so!—Pray, if all this is worth an explanation, which I suspect it is not, let us have it at once, that the conversation may take a pleasanter turn.

Fanny. It was not my fault, how-

ever. I desired Louisa not to say a word about it.

Mrs. Belmour. Oh! Louisa was in the secret. Come hither, my little girl, and tell me how Mrs. Jasperine has offended Sophia, and acquired the good favour of Fanny.

Louisa. Why, Aunt, the last time she was here, she went up stairs you know with her sister, and you with them, to shew them the present you had received from my uncle in India; and while you was gone out of the room to fetch it, Mrs. Jasperine said, "That second girl will be very handsome, and the two little ones, I believe, will be tolerable, but the eldest is changed for the worse. I hate prim misses of that age, they are generally the most disagreeable things in the world."

Mrs.

Mrs. Belmour. And where was the necessity of your repeating this? Indeed, Louisa, I am very angry with you.

Louisa. My dear Aunt, pray forgive me. I was not so very much to blame; for Fanny herself heard part of it as well as me, and she made me tell her the rest.

Mrs. Belmour. I know not which of you, Sophia or Fanny, deserves the severer censure. You have both extremely displeased me. Nor am I much better satisfied with you, Louisa; your age, however, is some excuse: but that Fanny should not feel the impropriety of repeating the foolish remark of a foolish woman, or that you, Sophia, should think it worth your while to be angry at it, gives me equal concern for both of you.

I beg, if you cannot better regulate your minds and your tempers, than thus to fall into something much too like a wrangle, (indulging on one side vanity offensive to every body, and, on the other, peevish regret, injurious, Sophia, to yourself,) that you would both of you conceal from observation such very disgusting passions. By struggling to hide them, you may, perhaps, learn to conquer them. As to you, Louisa, who, young as you are, ought to know how odious the character of a tale-bearer is, I will say no more now about the fault you have committed, since you seem to be sincerely concerned; but the next time I have occasion to reprove you, it will be with more severity.

(Sophia, Fanny, and Louisa leave the room in tears.)

Mary.

Mary. My dear Aunt, I am so sorry for them! Pray be not very angry.

Mrs. Belmour. It is rather in sorrow than in anger I have spoken, Mary. I am sorry to see any of you indulging dispositions, which, while they will infallibly embitter your future lives, will not fail to make you disliked by others. I grieve to observe so much of envy in Sophia, though I believe she does what she can to avoid shewing it: and it is equally painful to me to remark in Fanny a restless vanity, that urges her always to ask, or discover by any means however unjustifiable, what is said of her, especially if she has reason to believe their opinion favourable to the high idea she has of her own personal beauty.

Mary.

Mary. Yes, my dear Aunt; but you know every body has some fault or other.

Mrs. Belmour. And so, because we have learned to say that, we each of us fancy we have a right to indulge some failing (knowing it to be such), and are satisfied that there is no occasion to correct it, because every body has some fault or other. I don't love those common-place sayings; but we shall lose our walk. What say you, boys, and you, Mary, to a long ramble?

Mary. What, without Sophia and Fanny, and poor Louisa?

Mrs. Belmour. No; we will invite them to be of the party, and endeavour to think no more of what has happened. Go, Mary, and tell them our intention.

(*Sophia,*

(Sophia, Fanny, and Louisa come down prepared for their walk.)

Mrs. Belmour. We will make two visits to-day. The first shall be to Lady Penelope Piper, who, you know, consents to do me the great favour to see me, and at any hour; but holds all the rest of this neighbourhood in supreme contempt. Lady Penelope is a woman of fashion, married to a man of very large fortune, and who is also a good-natured and agreeable man; she has two fine children, and every thing about her that the most fastidious luxury can desire: her husband's whole study is to prevent her wishes, and, to all appearance, she ought to be the happiest woman in the world; but such are her extraordinary talents for making herself miserable, that she is, in reality, the most unhappy woman breathing.

There

There is nothing that happens which is not a source of discontent. It is too hot or too cold; the weather is unwholesome, she is sure there will be a great deal of sickness; the north-east wind destroys her; hot weather makes her so languid, it is impossible for her to exist. She cannot endure the noise of London, nor breathe in so thick an atmosphere; but the country is so dreary it quite oppresses her spirits. She cannot bear the fatigue of large assemblies, but a private party is so excessive dull! Her servants are certainly the most worthless set that ever lived. They do not, however, mind her whining, and their master pays them well for submitting to it in silence, or there would never be any servants in the house. As to her children, she no otherwise cares for them, than as they serve as perpetual subjects

subjects of complaint. Her daughter, Miss Emily, is called very handsome. Her mother is astonished that any one can think so; and, sighing, observes, that she owes her red hair to her father's family. Her son is well enough, she says, except that he has his father's strange awkward walk, and a voice which really shakes her nerves to atoms. As to those whom this poor woman calls her friends, it is unfortunate to be classed among them; for she not only dwells with pleasure on their faults while they are called her friends, but soon contrives to quarrel with them, and to vilify them in every way possible. Upon the whole, so wretched a being infests not the earth, as Lady Penelope Piper.

Mary. Oh! pray, my dear Aunt,
do

do not let us go there this evening. Why should we?

Mrs. Belmour. I had my views in proposing it; but, indeed, I do not know why, in general, we should make these sort of visits, unless it is, because we mechanically perform certain ceremonies, passively give up our time to people we neither love nor esteem, and call it mixing with society, and conforming to the customs of the world. For once, however, my dear Mary, I will indulge you with an exemption from this disagreeable service of enforced civility. You can all of you imagine from my description what kind of being Lady Penelope is: we will now take nearly the same walk we did yesterday, only we will go all the way over the heath to the back of the park. (*They proceed on their way.*)

Julius.

Julius. Here are still honeysuckles in bloom. See, madam, what a fine branch I have got! Will you please to accept them?

Mrs. Belmour. Most willingly, my dear Julius. This is one of the most fragrant of our plants. It is called the wood-bine from its climbing over the hedges and low shrubs. The Latin name is *periclimenum*. It is also called *lonicera* and *caprifolium*; and, in French, *chevre-feuille*. This is the *periclimenum vulgare*, or common honeysuckle. You see it has five stamina, and one style; and its flowers, for every one of these tubes is a distinct flower, is monopetalous, or of one petal. If you will bring me a bouquet of wild flowers, such as you can now find, I will preserve them in water, not only to shew you that I

value these little good-natured attentions, but to give Mary an opportunity of making sketches from nature of plants which are natives of our own country.

Lionel. Pray, Aunt, what is this flower which I found under that old wall among dung and rubbish? It is extremely pretty, of a pale yellow, you see, striped or veined with purple.

Mrs. Belmour. It is the henbane, in Latin, *hyoscyamus*; and is nearly allied in its characters to *nicotiana*, or tobacco. This also is monopetalous, or of one petal; and it is ranged by Linnæus in the first section of his fifth class, the *Pentandria Monogynia*, that is, with five stamina and one style.

Mary. And here, Aunt, is a plant growing wild, that is extremely like
the

the mignonet which is in our windows and our garden—only it is not sweet, and is taller and coarser.

Mrs. Belmour. This is the *reseda*, or dyer's weed, a native of this country; we call this plant also the bastard rocket. That which is sown to perfume our gardens, and which we see at many windows in London, is the *reseda odorata*, or mignonet. It is placed in the third section of Linnaeus's eleventh class, *Dodecandria Trigynia*, and has an undecided number of stamina from eleven to nineteen, and three styles. Now we will delay our little botanical dissertation till we return home, and I will shew you from this rising ground the place whither we are going. Do you observe just below us that neat cottage? It was taken, you see, out of the waste, and now is almost encircled between a

rocky eminence of the park and its own humble enclosure, planted for a little kitchen-garden and orchard. There lives the mother of a family, who was, and I hope and believe is still, the very reverse of Lady Penelope, with an account of whom we began our walk. Let us go in.

Mary. It is quite a pleasure to see so pretty a garden. And look, Sophia, what a quantity of bee-hives!

Sophia. I don't see much beauty in such things.

Mary. Beauty? No—there is not much beauty; but surely it is pleasant to see poor people with things about them that make them appear happy and comfortable.

Sophia. It is great affectation in you, Mary, to pretend to know or care any thing about all that.

Mary. Ah! well, sister, you are
in

in an ill-humour, and it is better for me not to say any thing.

Sophia. I'm sure you are quite as wise to let it alone. Such affectation is quite as bad as Miss Fanny's vanity. See! she is gone already to the woman's bit of a looking-glass that is stuck against the wall, and is perking and admiring her sweet self. Such pride really makes one sick.

Mrs. Belmour (*who had been talking to the female cottager*). I thank you, Mrs. Beanfield, I will sit down for a moment. It is a great while since I have seen you.

Dame Beanfield. Yes, indeed, ma'am, it is a very long while. I thought once or twice to have taken the liberty to have inquired after you and the young ladies, but it has been a busy time with me. And since Peggy left me, to be sure, my work is

a good deal increased; but thank God I have kept my health!

Mrs. Belmour. And your cheerfulness and your industry, I am sure.

Mrs. Beanfield. I hope so, ma'am. Indeed, what is the use of being cast down? It mends nothing; and if I was to mope and sink instead of doing my best, why, I could not expect other folks to do for me; and then what would become of my poor children, you know?

Mrs. Belmour. You have still—how many?

Mrs. Beanfield. Seven, madam, besides James, who, I hope, is doing well, and Peggy that was married the other day.

Mrs. Belmour. Well married, I hope, and to your satisfaction?

Mrs. Beanfield. Poor folks like us, ma'am, have no choice, you know,

as people in upper life have. The young man, who is just out of his time, is a journeyman carpenter. He has a good character, and loves her; and though I could have wished he had been a little before hand in the world, yet I content myself with hoping that they may do better than I did, who, you know, ma'am, made what my poor father thought a rich marriage, and had besides something of my own not inconsiderable for persons in our way. And you see what it is all come to: I have been left with nine children, and still I have seven to scramble for as well as I can.

Mrs. Belmour. Indeed there is great merit in your conduct; but I cannot imagine how you have managed to get on so well, and to have every thing so neat about you.

Mrs. Beanfield. It is not all, ma'am,
owing

owing to myself, for I do not believe that, without help, I could have done it; by help, I mean my Lord's kindness to me. This cottage was built by an old servant on a piece of waste ground, and he was become quite aged, and unable to shift for himself; so when my husband left me in so sad a situation, my Lord was so good, both to poor old Richard and me, as to propose that I should take care of him, and live in the cottage. My only fear was, that such an antient man would be troubled by so many young children; but luckily he was good-natured, and fond of them, and used to like to have them about him; and they loved to wait upon him, and never disturbed his garden, which was his chief pleasure and amusement. So we went on very well for about a year, my Lord being the best master
in

in the world, to be sure. I used to work for the family. I taught all my children to do something; and James being fond of a sea-faring life, my Lord got him a good birth, as it is called, in a ship commanded by a relation of his own; and soon after, when old Richard died, my Lord gave me the cottage and all the furniture as it stood. Since that, is now four years; and if it was not that six of my seven remaining children are girls, and only the youngest a boy, who is but just six years old, I should have got more of them out.

Mrs. Belmour. Now pray tell me how you all employ yourselves.

Mrs. Beanfield. Why, madam, for myself, I wash and mend for some of my Lord's servants, and take in plain work; and that, with managing my own little matters and teaching the children,

children, is almost as much as I can do.

Peggy, you know, is now out of the question. Isabel, my next girl, is a very good work-woman; and she has learned to mantua-make tolerably well, so that she gets a very good subsistence in making bonnets and cloaks, petticoats and gowns, not only for the servants at the great house, but for the shops at the next town. Perhaps she might do better still, that is, she might get more money, if I chose she should go out to day-work; but the people say she is a pretty girl, and I won't have her risk being made vain, and perhaps wicked, by hearing the flattery of footmen, and learning airs of ladies' maids.

Mrs. Belmour. You judge perfectly right.

Mrs. Beanfield. Eleanor is the next;

next : she is now thirteen, and I have had her taught to work wire for paper-makers. You know there is a person of that business at the next village ; and I gave a premium, as they call it, to have her instructed, without making her quite an apprentice, and she is now able to earn from ten to fourteen shillings a week.

Mrs. Belmour. Indeed I highly honour you for the industrious manner in which you have brought your children up.

Mrs. Beanfield. Betsy, who is a year younger, has learned to make lace ; then the two next, Mary and Anne, I have had taught to write and read, and to spin and knit stockings. They do all that very well ; and the youngest, my poor little Jeffy, I hope to bring up as well, as at nine years old she is the best knitter in the parish of
her

her age, but she is not quite so strong as the others; I don't keep her sitting so much, but send her sometimes out with her brother Archibald, who already gets employment in my Lord's beech-wood as a wedge-cutter, and when he has not work, the two children, and sometimes the older ones, gather mushrooms, or strawberries and raspberries, in the season, or they pick up acorns and beech-mast, to help fatten our pig, and gain a little matter by leasing in harvest time; and every little helps. We all work in the garden, and have had such fine flowers while James was at home, that he used to get a good deal from the neighbouring gardeners for slips and seeds. My bees, too, in which I have been very lucky, have brought me in from five to eight pounds every year; and my orchard is now in such full bearing,

bearing, that, in a good year, I get cyder enough for our drink, and sell apples to the amount of about three pounds. I have a piece of ground where I raise potatoes more than we use, and the rest either go to market, or help to fat our pig. My Lord gave me a half-bred Alderney cow, which I really believe is the best milch cow in the parish—and therefore we seldom want milk; and when it happens that we do, the servants at the great house have my Lord's orders to let me have some. You see, therefore, madam, that I have great reason to be thankful and contented. It is true I was cruelly used; my husband dissipated almost all he had, and used to live at an ale-house. Very often he has taken mine and the children's clothes to sell or pawn, that he might have money to buy liquor; and, if

I was at any time provoked to complain, he did not scruple to use personal violence; infomuch that my life was not always safe with him. At last he became acquainted with an attorney, one Brownington, who soon helped him to an end of the little he had left. He was put into prison, and I and my children, after all the goods had been seized and sold, were turned destitute into the street.

My youngest boy, the poor little fellow that you see there in the garden with his spade, was then an infant at the breast—and Jeffy was hardly eighteen months old. The rest too were quite infants, or at least were not old enough to be of any use to me.

Mr. Beanfield's friends are, some of them, you know, very rich people, and all of them are well in the world ;
but

but we were no sooner reduced, than, though they had rather encouraged Beanfield's extravagance till then, they all tried to shake him off. One reproached him for his thoughtlessness; another for his drunkenness; and a third told him of his other vicious indulgences: but his sister, and one or two others of his nearest relations, attacked me for what certainly I could not help, and very severely suffered for. But I soon found that this pretended wrath was only an excuse: they were afraid, that as I had nine children without an home, I should ask some of them to take one, and some another. They little knew that I would sooner have worked at the hardest labour than have been obliged to any of them. Thank God, I was not—I was assisted by nobody but my Lord ——, who is the poor

person's friend, and is, indeed, God's delegate on earth : and now, madam, I am got so much above my first distresses, and my children are growing up and all industrious, and I trust that we shall, though poor, be independent. I assure you I am as content as any one can be, and never rise in the morning to my work, without thanking God that he has enabled me to earn my own and my children's bread in peace.

On their way home, Mrs. Belmour took occasion to point out to the young party the difference between the character she had described of Lady Penelope Piper, who, surrounded with every comfort, every luxury and splendour, was devoured by discontent,

content, and made herself and every one around her wretched, and this worthy inhabitant of a cottage on a waste, who by industry had acquired independence, and possessed invariable cheerfulness.

DIALOGUE IV.

Slight Historical Sketches—a Castle—and the
Little Hop-pickers.

THE father of Mrs. Belmour's wards now wrote to her, to say he had provided an house for them at Southampton for the remainder of the summer; and meaning to pass a fortnight with them himself, he requested her to have the goodness immediately to remove thither with them. She, of course, was glad to see any proof of his regard for them, and complied as soon as the necessary preparations for the journey could be made.

Mr.

Mr. Harland sent his own coach and four for his daughters and their Aunt. The boys had their horses, and their journey was to be of three days, as they were to sleep the first night at the house of one of their friends near Bagshot, and the next at Farnham. When they arrived there at an early hour—eager after novelty, and with that lightness of spirits which young persons always feel from change of place, they obtained permission to ramble about till it was dark. Their first visit, of course, was to the Castle, whither Mrs. Belmour, who was extremely fond of plants, of which there was a fine collection, accompanied them; and her instructive conversation was thus continued:

Mrs. Belmour. As you, Julius, are a little of an antiquarian, can you tell

tell us any thing relative to this castle?

Julius. Yes; it is among those named in an account I have of all these buildings in England, but I recollect nothing remarkable about its history: it was one of those built, I think, in the reign of King Stephen.

Mrs. Belmour. And can any of you recollect from what particular circumstance it was, that so many of those fortresses called castles, which we now see either in ruins or applied to other purposes, were known to have been erected in that reign?

Sophia. It was because there were at that time two Pretenders to the Crown; one was the Empress Maud, or Matilda, widow of the Emperor Henry the Fifth of Germany, who
married

married afterwards Geoffry Count of Anjou. She was the only surviving child of Henry the First; but his nephew Stephen, the other competitor, taking advantage of her absence at the death of her father, caused himself to be proclaimed King.

Mrs. Belmour. Torn by these two competitors for almost nineteen years, England became a theatre of war and bloodshed; and each party endeavouring to secure themselves by the possession of posts which either commanded the country or were of sufficient strength to protect their adherents and serve as garrisons, a great number of castles were at that time built. I have read in the account of this castle, that it was of considerable consequence in those wars which afterwards distracted the country, when the English and Norman

man Barons, detesting the character, and indignant at the tyranny of the weak and wicked usurper John, the grandson of Matilda, flew into arms against him, and, after the inhuman murder of his nephew, Arthur Duke of Brittany, the son of Geoffry his elder brother, no longer kept any terms with a monster, who was active only in cruelty and injustice, and who had ignominiously submitted his kingdoms to the Pope; having, in a form dictated by Pope Innocent the Third, an imperious and able pontiff, resigned England and Ireland to St. Peter and St. Paul, and to Pope Innocent and his successors.

Sophia. Shakespear has written, you know, a tragedy called King John, in which the artful address of that detested tyrant, when he tries to persuade

persuade Hubert to murder the innocent Prince his nephew ; the pleading of the unhappy boy to his murderer ; the maternal anguish of the wretched Constance the mother of Arthur ; and the remorse and dying agonies of the wicked monarch, are all most forcibly painted. There too is represented the resignation of the crown, by John, to Pandolph the Pope's Nuncio.

Mary. What is meant by a Nuncio?—I saw the word in the Abridgement of the History of England, and thought then I would ask you its meaning.

Mrs. Belmour. It means a messenger, or as we rather say ambassador, and comes from the Italian word *nunziare* to announce.—Some ecclesiastic of rank was usually employed by the Popes to signify their orders to
the

the monarchs of Christendom, over whom as the successors of St. Peter the Popes assumed unbounded authority.—But to return to the subject we have digressed from: When a monarch is neither beloved nor respected, he is not long obeyed. The proud and spirited Barons, who felt how unworthy such a man was to govern them, took advantage of the cowardly and abject character of John, and, combining against him, determined on extorting from him a greater degree of freedom than they had enjoyed since the Conquest: and this, though they had no just ideas of political liberty, they at length obtained. It was in vain that the Pope thundered forth his anathemas against this attempt. They met their worthless and reluctant King in a place called Runnymede, near Windsor; where,

where, after some feeble attempts to evade it, the Barons compelled John to sign that famous deed called Magna Charta, the Great Charter, which granted very important privileges to all orders of men, and laid the foundation of that freedom which has for many centuries been the glory and security of the English people.

Julius. I remember some lines intended for a pillar or monument of that transaction.

Mrs. Belmour. Well enough to repeat them? If you do, we will, with the leave of the honourable and reverend proprietor of this castle, sit down on these steps of the keep, and, as we have yet time, continue our conversation.

Julius. The inscription for a column at Runnymede, written by Dr. Akenfide:

Thou who the verdant plain dost traverse here,
 While Thames among his willows from thy view
 Retires, O stranger! stay thee, and the scene
 Around contemplate well.—This is the place
 Where England's ancient Barons, clad in arms
 And stern with conquest, from their tyrant King
 (Then render'd tame) did challenge and secure
 The Charter of their freedom.—Pass not on
 Till thou hast blest'd their memory, and paid
 Those thanks which God appointed the reward
 Of public virtue.—And if chance thy home
 Salute thee with a father's honour'd name,
 Go call thy sons; instruct them what a debt
 They owe their ancestors; and make them swear
 To pay it, by transmitting down entire
 Those sacred rights to which themselves were
 born.

Mrs. Belmour. Admirably repeated,
 my dear boy, and as if you felt and
 understood the subject! Have you
 ever recited it on your days of pub-
 lic speaking at school?

Julius. I learned it for that pur-
 pose, and took some pains to do it
 well;

well; but, when the Doctor understood what lines I had chosen, he ordered me to give them up, and learn something else. He would not suffer any of us, he said, to repeat any such rant about liberty and nonsense.

Mrs. Belmour. Indeed! Well, we will not comment on the Doctor's decision, but conclude what we have to say on castles, and particularly on this.

In these wars then, and in those which followed between the great Barons and Henry the Third, the feeble-minded son of this detestable King John, this castle was often the seat of defensive war, and saw petty though bloody skirmishes beneath its walls. The Norman and English Barons, turbulent and restless during the minority of Henry, were driven to open

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violence,

violence, by the rapacity of his ministers and creatures, as soon as he assumed the reins of government. His reign was a continual scene of contention, in which the famous Simon de Montfort Earl of Leicester made a very conspicuous figure. Edward, the King's eldest son, was, in one of the battles he fought against the Barons, made prisoner; and after he had escaped, and returned to head the party which adhered to the King, he gave the Barons battle at Lewes; in which though he had at first the advantage, his unguarded eagerness urged him to pursue a body of men, chiefly Londoners, whom he hated for an offence they had given to his mother; and returning from the pursuit, he found the Earl of Leicester had entirely defeated his father's troops, and that his father himself,

and

and his uncle the King of the Romans, were captives. The Prince was compelled to surrender himself also; and it was not till after the death of Leicester that the Prince, who, from the imbecility of his father, undertook the chief government of the kingdom, could restore order and tranquillity.

Fanny. This Edward is the same, is it not, who is represented in Thomson's play of Edward and Eleonora?

Mrs. Belmour. The same.--Of his exploits we may take occasion to speak another day. He is one of those monarchs whose reign the English record with pride and satisfaction, as he subdued the Welsh, and nearly rendered Scotland a province to England. But we must not wander into the wide field of history, but recall this monarch at present, only to observe, that this for-

treſs was frequently beſieged during his father's reign (Henry the Third), and afterwards ſuffered in the ſenſeleſs conflict between the Houſes of York and Lancaſter, which for almoſt a century made England a ſcene of carnage and deſolation. Both parties were ſo utterly worthleſs, that the wonder is, how the people of this country could be ſo impoſed upon as to ſacrifice their lives in the quarrel of either.

This caſtle was again defended and attacked in the civil war of the laſt century, when the miſguided monarch Charles the Firſt at laſt perished on a ſcaffold. But ſince internal peace has been eſtabliſhed, it has become the reſidence of the Biſhops of Wincheſter, one of the richeſt ſees in England, and, improved as it now is, makes a very pleaſant and reſpectable

able residence. This ruin among which we now sit was formerly the keep, or inner castle, a sort of dernier ressort; where, as it was the strongest part of these structures, the besieged retired when the rest was in possession of the enemy.

Lionel. Pray, Aunt, what are those plants which climb up poles, and of which we see so many on the road?

Mrs. Belmour. I rather wonder that you should not know, Lionel. They are hops*, one of the ingredients in the usual beverage of the English beer.—They are just now picking them: we will go into an hop-garden, which is often a gay and pleasant scene of cheerful labour. Come! we have yet time before the pickers leave their work.

* *Lupulus.*

(They take their way from the castle to the nearest hop-garden.)

Lionel. Oh! this is delightful.—Look at the men tearing up the poles! and then such quantities of people picking off the hops round those pieces of cloth!

Mrs. Belmour. Those pieces of cloth sewn together at the end, and suspended on wood, are called bins; and those men are called pole-pullers.

Lionel. How they sing and holla, and laugh!

Sophia. They are mighty rude people, methinks.—Some of them seem to me to be gipsies and travellers, as our servants call them.

Mrs. Belmour. I fancy this business collects all kinds of people together, as it is easy at least, the mere act of severing the blossom of the hop from the bind or vine; and you meet in this country,

country, and in Kent, carts filled with these labourers, collecting from all parts of the country to assist at what may be not unaptly compared to the vintage in France.

Sophia. From stories I have read, I cannot help fancying the peasants in that country, and in Italy, are better dressed and better behaved than such people as these:—and I have read in some Travels, that the Italian country girls are habited in silk jackets, and have little straw hats lined with green lustring and set off with flowers. How dirty and squalid these people are!

Mrs. Belmour. You must consider, Sophy, the difference which climate makes in the condition of the poor. What sort of a figure do you think a female peasant here would make so accoutred? Perhaps, one of our country
girls

girls is as well able to dress as your elegant Italian peasant; but she buys her a long-tailed cotton gown, which certainly is not at all a commodious dress; a flounced blue, purple, or green stuff petticoat; and, if she is quite a rustic, a good scarlet cloak which costs two guineas, and often more, and a black hat or bonnet. The appearance she makes, though as costly, is certainly not half so elegant, not only as your Neapolitan or Livornese, who look (if they are justly described) like Opera dancers, but by no means so light and smart as a girl of the same rank among our Norman neighbours, particularly those of a tract of land called *Le pays de Caux*, where you see the fair *Cauchoise* sitting quite sideways on an ass, which is led by her lover, or some relation or man of gallantry of her own rank. Her dress

dress on gala days, or when she goes to market, is a cotton or sometimes a muslin petticoat flounced; a jacket of fine scarlet cloth fitting close to her shape; a clean plaited and laced muslin cap with long lappets streaming behind her, without an hat; a necklace of gold beads, to which is suspended a cross of the same precious metal, and ear-rings of the like materials. All which do not, perhaps, cost more than the habiliments of our women of the same rank, but are certainly more fancifully disposed.

Mary. My dear Aunt, I have been wandering with Julius round this place, and we have observed a little group that first excited our curiosity, and then made our hearts ache.

Mrs. Belmour. Pray conduct me to the party.—What! are those the children

children you mean, sitting under that hedge?

Mary. Yes, Aunt; only remark them. Is not that a beautiful girl who sits in so melancholy a posture? You see she has taken an hop-pole across her lap, and with those little children who are almost hid by the dangling blossoms and broad leaves, she is picking them into her apron which is spread on the ground. Do you know, I saw the tears run down her cheeks as she worked. She wiped them away, and seemed to try to get the better of her concern: but she could not; and when I spoke to her, she wept so that she could hardly answer me.

Mrs. Belmour. Indeed, Mary, she has a most interesting countenance, such a countenance as is seldom seen, at once sensible and simple. But what deep

deep dejection appears on it for so young a person! Surely she is not above fifteen; and seldom at that age, and in that rank of life, is misfortune seen to weigh so heavily. Perhaps we may be of some use to her: let us inquire.

Mrs. Belmour (*addressing herself to the peasant girl*). Pray, my dear, how much of that work can you do in the course of the day, and what do you earn?

The poor Girl. My mother-in-law is paid for my work, madam; I do not work for myself.

Mrs. Belmour. You seem to be uneasy. Is not your mother-in-law kind to you?

The poor Girl. I shall be punished, madam, if I complain; but, indeed, my fate is very dreadful. (*She bursts into tears.*)

Mrs. Belmour. Tell me your name, and how it happens that you are thus circumstanced. I imagine from your appearance, that you were not always brought up to work in the fields?

The poor Girl. No, madam, indeed I was not; but I could submit to that without murmuring, if I was only treated with common humanity.

Mrs. Belmour. Why does your father suffer you to be ill treated?

Poor Girl. Alas! madam, I have no father: he has been dead almost a year, and since that time——

Mrs. Belmour. Do not distress yourself thus; tell me if I can be of any service to you.

Poor Girl. You are very good, madam; but if my mother-in-law should know I complained——some of these little ones are her children, and they will tell her.

Mrs.

Mrs. Belmour. Come then with me, I will answer for your absence to her. (*Afide to Sophia and Mary.*) There is something so interesting in the face and manner of this young creature, that I cannot help attempting to serve her.

Mary. Yes, pray, Aunt, do! What a beautiful countenance she has!—(*The young person follows them timidly and trembling.*)

Mrs. Belmour. Well now, tell me in a few words, how it happens that you are so unlike the rest of the people I see here.—Your name, you say, is Beatrice?

Beatrice. Yes, madam.—My father was a considerable farmer; he married my mother out of the family of Lady Henrietta H——, who brought her from Switzerland as a

K 2 governess

governess to her Ladyship's younger children. She was an orphan; and on Lady Henrietta's death, the family being all dispersed, she accepted my father's offer of marriage, and they lived very happily together for seven years. I have one brother older than myself, and two sisters younger; one is only nine, the other five years old. My poor mother fell into a decline soon after the birth of the latter, and died in a few months. I was then twelve years old, and with her last breath she bade me give her blessing to my brother, who had been sent out to sea some time before at his own desire; and told me, that, when she was dead, I must be a mother to her two poor little girls.—(*Tears and sobs now prevented her from proceeding.*)

Mrs. Belmour. Compose yourself,
Beatrice!

Beatrice!—Think you are speaking to one, who, if it be in her power, will be your friend.

Beatrice. Ah! madam, your goodness—the kindness with which you speak to me is so unusual, that, together with the recollection of my poor mother, it quite overcomes me: but I will endeavour not to take up your time.—After my mother's death, my father was for some time in such despair, that his temper was entirely changed; it seemed as if he became insupportable to himself; and unhappily for us, he took to drinking, neglected his business, and his farm soon went to ruin. What was still worse, he connected himself with a very bad woman of the village, and was persuaded to marry her; and from that time the misery that we all suffered is not to be told. My poor father

died in great wretchedness about ten months ago. The woman took possession of every thing she could tear from the creditors, who, on their parts, had no pity for us, that were the innocent sufferers. We were turned into the street, but the parish—— (Oh! how little my mother thought we should be reduced to ask alms of the parish!) would do nothing for us, because the woman who called herself my father's widow had, they said, possessed herself of his goods. She became more and more abandoned as she became more desperate, and at last set out to travel about the country to beg or steal; she took her own three children, and the youngest of my unhappy mother's, with her, and left me, with the eldest, chargeable on the parish. They sent after her, however, and soon overtook her, and, having

having brought her back, made her, I know not by what law, take us also; and she thought she could compel me to be as wicked as she was, and that, as I was young, she might make money by my means:—but I never would become the wretched creature she would have made me; and though I have been barbarously beat, suffered all sorts of insults, and been often without food and without lodging, yet, I thank God, I have had courage hitherto to withstand all her cruelty, as well as her persuasion and her example. The two poor children my sisters make my heart ache most. I cannot go away without them; for I promised my mother as she was dying that I never would forsake them. Had it not been for that, I would have tried to have procured some humble service; for I should not care how hard

hard I worked, were I but out of the power of that wicked and most unfeeling woman.

Mrs. Belmour. You seem to have been well educated?

Beatrice. Yes, madam; for my station, perhaps too well. My mother was the daughter of a reputable tradesman at Lausanne, and was what is called very well accomplished. She taught me to speak French, which was her native tongue, as well as I could English; and I had learned music of her, and could play very tolerably: but all my books and a musical instrument, and a great deal of printed and manuscript music were swept away; and despondence, indeed despair, has long been so heavy on my mind, that I now do not recollect all that without tears of anguish; and often I think it would be better if I had been ignorant and
gross,

grofs, like the people whom I am condemned to live with.

Mrs. Belmour. And what if means could be found, Beatrice, to take you out of this sad way of life?

Beatrice. Oh! madam, God Almighty only could reward so good an action. The duty and thankfulness of my whole life would be too little; but my poor Albertine, my poor Adele, what would become of them?

Mrs. Belmour. I think I could find means to provide for them.

Beatrice. Oh! what blessings you would be entitled to from us all, madam! But it is impossible; you cannot be so good!

Mary. Oh! you do not know *how* good my Aunt is, or else you would not doubt it.

Mrs. Belmour. Come, come, I have a plan that I think will do: I have an
house

house twelve miles from London, left under the care of a very faithful old servant: you and your two sisters shall be sent thither till my return from Southampton: I will give proper directions about you; and I am sure, though I am not very rich, I shall, by the help of my friends, find means to assist you all.

Beatrice and her two sisters, both very lovely children notwithstanding the squalid wretchedness in which they had lately lived, were now directed to accompany Mrs. Belmour and her wards to the inn. She there convinced herself that all she had heard was true, and, sending for the step-mother of these unfortunate orphans, soon got her to give up all the power she

she had usurped over them. They were then sent to Mrs. Belmour's house, when she gave directions to have them decently clothed, and provided for till her return. And having done this generous and praise-worthy action, the whole party proceeded, with all those pleasurable sensations which the consciousness of benevolence bestows, to their destination.

Beatrice proved to be a young person of very superior understanding, and so well accomplished, as to preclude the necessity of having masters for Mary and Louisa, Mrs. Belmour having taken her into her family. From thence in about two years she married extremely well, and was succeeded in her place by Albertine, who had, by a subscription raised for her, been kept at school as an half-boarder. Beatrice took Adele to live with

with her; and thus, in consequence of the fortunate accident of Mary's and her brother's noticing these poor girls in the hop-ground, three innocent creatures were rescued from the horrors of the guilt and misery too often incurred by extreme poverty, and were rendered valuable to society and happy in themselves.

DIALOGUE V.

A Walk by the Water—with Sketches of
Mineralogy.

ARRIVED at their destination, the young party were delighted with the beautiful scenery around Southampton. The water, with its woody banks, and white sails glancing in the sun; the parties of pleasure that were made for them upon it; and the views they enjoyed of places remarkable in history, all combined to keep alive their attention, and awaken that spirit of inquiry which their Aunt loved

to encourage, as the foundation of knowledge at once useful and agreeable to its possessor,—teaching

“ That which before us lies in daily life,”

as well as opening those sources of investigation which lead to the arts ornamental to life, and the sciences; that prevent the *tædium vitæ*—the weariness which too frequently renders it burthensome, even in the highest prosperity.

Mrs. Belmour and her interesting group were one evening walking on the beach at low tide, when Lionel, approaching with a mass of some dark-looking heavy substance in his hands, said——

Lionel. I have found something that resembles coal, only it is harder, and is veined and spotted with yellow, which looks almost like gold.

Mrs.

Mrs. Belmour. It is coal, but has been long hardened by immersion in the sea-water, and beaten by the waves till its softer parts are washed away. Those veins which seem to run through it, are formed of some mineral mingled with it in its bed.

Lionel. What is coal?

Mrs. Belmour. It is an inflammable substance which lies in beds in the earth, generally mingled with sulphur or brimstone. There are several sorts of it, and it is in more general use in England as fuel, than in any other country. On the continent of Europe they seldom burn it but for the fires necessary in their manufactures; and both the French and the Italians have a strong prejudice against it, as being unwholesome, and particularly prejudicial to the lungs.

Julius. Pray tell me what are minerals and metals.

Mrs. Belmour. There are six metals, properly so called: gold and silver, which are distinguished by the name of the precious metals; lead, copper, iron, and tin. But of minerals, which are also produced in the bowels of the earth, the list is more numerous: quicksilver, sulphur, alum, salts, antimony, vitriol, ochre, &c. The magnet is also a mineral.

Julius. What an extraordinary thing the magnet is!—I do not quite understand what I have read about it.

Mrs. Belmour. Nor am I particularly versed in its qualities. I only know generally, that it is a species of iron found in iron mines, which has the singular property of attracting that metal;

metal ; and that, if you break and divide a large mass of it into innumerable parts, each of these will point north and south ; a quality, as well as that of attraction, which it communicates to other pieces of iron, if they are rubbed on it for a considerable time. In consequence of this extraordinary power, it has become of the most essential use in navigation. The ancients knew no means of finding their way at sea but by the stars : of course, when those celestial bodies were not visible, the wandering sailor was frequently at a loss how to steer. The mariner's compass, of which the needle constantly points north and south, now instructs the seaman in all weathers how he is to guide his ship.

The first knowledge of this useful

application of the magnet is supposed to come from Marco Polo, a Venetian, in the 13th century: but it is said to have been before known to the Chinese.

Julius. But besides the minerals you have mentioned, there are diamonds, are there not, and other jewels found in the earth?

Mrs. Belmour. You have heard of diamond mines, but diamonds are not therefore minerals. This precious stone was called adamant by the ancients. You remember frequently hearing the expression, "as hard as adamant," the diamond being the hardest body in nature. The stones, the possession of which is such an object of human vanity, are found in mines in the East Indies. And there are also two rivers in that country, in the sands of which are diamonds.

Lionel. But in England we have neither gold nor diamonds?

Mrs. Belmour. Nor is it to be regretted. We could not here work the mines if we had, since that is done by wretched slaves, who are compelled to labour without clothes, lest they should secrete any part of the treasure they are employed to procure. Riches are not always the means of power; it is well known that a nation possessing iron, will always be the master of one possessing only gold. It is probable that the iron within its bowels, and the knowledge possessed by its inhabitants how to work it, are the causes why that quarter of the world called Europe, has for many thousand years possessed so decided a superiority over the other divisions of the earth. In the rugged bosom of the mountains of the North this
useful

useful metal is chiefly found, though there are very considerable quantities of it in Spain and France. Much of what is used, however, comes from Sweden and Norway. Manufactured in furnaces by means of extreme heat, it forms, either singly or united with copper, all the utensils with which man cultivates the ground, or raises on it his habitation, or supplies himself with the conveniencies of life. Happy if he confined its use only to those purposes, and had not contrived with it instruments of destruction!

Julius. But steel is more fit for those purposes?

Mrs. Belmour. Steel is only refined iron, condensed so as to receive a finer polish, and manufactured in a different manner. The metal so prepared, and cut with the exquisite skill which our workmen have acquired,
has

has been sold in trinkets and ornaments at the price of gold.

Unfortunately for human nature, and unfortunately for the honour of christianity, one of these gifts of God has been made the instrument of depopulating that part of the earth where he had placed the other. You have read, I think, of the destruction of the empire of Peru by the Spaniards?

Julius. Yes, I have; and I remember I was so much shocked at it, that I found it impossible to finish the story.

Mary. But I have also read, Aunt, that the man who discovered America was not cruel at all.

Mrs. Belmour. No; he was a man of humanity as well as talents. He was destined to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, and to discover another continent, equal in magnitude

magnitude to all the then known world. I fancy, Sophia, you recollect some particulars relative to this great event? It is not long since I gave you an abridged account of it to make into French.

Sophia. I believe I can repeat it with tolerable correctness: Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America, was a native of Genoa. Being a man of considerable knowledge for the time in which he lived, and of deep reflection, he formed a more just idea of the figure of the earth than was given by the rude charts of that unenlightened period, and imagined he could find a way to India and to China, countries already known and traded to by Europeans, through the western ocean. He proposed the experiment to the Genoese Government, who rejected it as visionary.

sionary. He next applied to several other powers of Europe, among others, to Henry the Seventh then King of England: but that cold-blooded and avaricious monarch had no spirit of adventure; and Columbus, after long sollicitation and infinite mortification, was at length employed by Ferdinand King of Spain, but was still more protected and encouraged by Isabella his Queen; and, being appointed to the command of three ships, sailed in the month of August, 1492, on a voyage which finally produced the most important effects to the world of any that was ever undertaken.

Columbus encountered infinite difficulties from the mutinous disposition of his crew, and was even in danger of falling a victim to their discontent. After being at sea thirty-three
three

three days, the longest voyage ever known till then, he landed on what are now called the Bahama Islands. No gold, however, was to be found there; and it was after gold he was most eager, because he knew nothing would so much recommend him to his employers. In consequence, however, of these inquiries, he next discovered the island by him and ever since called Hispaniola.

Mrs. Belmour. We must look for these places on the map, in our lesson of geography for to-morrow. Do you remember any more particulars?

Sophia. Columbus, after planting a colony in Hispaniola, returned to Spain. He afterwards discovered Cuba and Jamaica. But the natives, who had at first imagined the Spaniards to be descended from heaven, and had worshipped them as beings
of

of a superior order, had now discovered that these demi-gods were mere men, superior only in the possession of instruments of destruction, and, tired with their tyranny and rapacity, rebelled against them, and would have destroyed them but for the prudence and valour of Columbus. His enemies in Spain were all this time endeavouring to ruin him; and he was at length compelled to return thither, where he was tried for misconduct, acquitted, and once more resumed his projects of discovery. On his third voyage, he landed on the Continent of South America, an immense tract abounding in those precious metals which excite the avarice of Europeans.

But the Spaniards whom he had left at Hispaniola rebelled, and Columbus, now infirm from fatigue rather

than years, was under the necessity of returning thither to attempt the restoration of peace. While he was engaged in this arduous undertaking, persons in Spain who envied his glory intrigued against him so successfully, that a judge was sent from thence to try him; his effects were confiscated, and he was himself, with his brothers, loaded with irons, and embarked for Spain. * “The captain of the vessel, touched with respect for the years and great merit of Columbus, offered to take off the irons, but he did not permit it. ‘Since the King has commanded that I should obey his governor, he shall find me as obedient to this as I have been to all his other orders: nothing but his commands

* These sentences are copied literally from “Burke’s Settlements in America,” as being remarkable, and incapable of abridgement.

shall

shall release me: if twelve years hardship and fatigue; if continual dangers and frequent famine; if the ocean first opened, and five times passed and repassed, to add a new world abounding with wealth to the Spanish monarchy; and if an infirm premature old age brought on by those services, deserve these chains as a reward, it is very fit I should wear them to Spain, and keep them by me as memorials to the end of my life.'"—

“Great minds, though more apt to forgive injuries, perhaps, than common souls, do not easily lose the memory of the wrongs that are done them. Columbus afterwards carried these irons with him wherever he went; they hung constantly in his chamber, and he ordered them to be buried with him.”—

“Notwithstanding the discouragement which one would have imagined this circumstance would have been to the spirit of discovery, many projectors undertook voyages to the new world; and among others Americus Vesputius, an enterprising and skilful geographer and navigator, who having obtained the charts of Columbus, and pursued the same line of inquiry, contrived to arrogate to himself the merit of the discovery, and gave his name to half the world.”—Columbus, who was thus unjustly defrauded, returned a fourth time to America, made farther discoveries, and died at length in Spain, unrewarded by any thing but a consciousness of his great actions.

Mrs. Belmour. I thank you, Sophia; so far I recollect your theme
went.

went. It remains only to relate, that the treachery and cruelties practised by Cortez on the Mexicans and their unhappy Emperor Montezuma, and by Pizarro on the Peruvians, are such as cannot be read without horror. It is a shocking reflection, that the thirst of gold should engage men, who professed christianity, and were even bigots to their religion, in acts of such enormity. But it seems as if, by a future and more just arrangement of the affairs of this world, those who are cursed with the hateful passion of avarice find their punishment in the acquisition of that money, which they forget their humanity to obtain. It is often known to be the case in private life. Pope, I think, says—

Damned to the mines, an equal fate betides
The wretch who digs it, and the wretch who
hides.

M 3

And

And certainly, in regard to nations; those which possess mines of the precious metals are poorer than those who have only iron. Spain and Portugal, since South America has become a part of their possessions, have degenerated in arts and arms; in commerce and in agriculture; and the poet's prophecy has been completely fulfilled. My dear Mary, you learned yesterday the short poem called "The Revenge of America*," try now if you can repeat it.

Mary. When fierce Pizarro's legions flew
O'er ravaged fields of rich Peru,
Struck with his bleeding people's woes,
Old India's awful Genius rose.
He sat on Andes' † topmost stone,
And heard a thousand nations groan;

* By Dr. Joseph Warton.

† The Andes are mountains in America, supposed to be the highest in the world.

For

For grief his feathery crown he tore,
 To see huge Plata * foam with gore;
 He broke his arrows, stamp'd the ground,
 To view his cities smoking round.
 What woes, he cry'd, hath lust of gold
 O'er my poor country widely roll'd!
 Plunderers, proceed! my bowels tear,
 But ye shall meet destruction there:
 From the deep-vaulted mine shall rise
 The insatiate fiend, pale Avarice,
 Whose steps shall trembling justice fly,
 Peace, order, law, and liberty.
 I see all Europe's children curst
 With lucre's universal thirst:
 The rage that sweeps my sons away,
 My baneful gold shall well repay.

* La Plata, one of the great rivers in America.

DIALOGUE VI.

An Evening Ramble in the Forest.

ABOUT seven miles from Southampton, in a sequestered part of the New Forest, there resided an old friend of Mrs. Belmour's, with whom, not having seen her for many years, she now took occasion to pass a fortnight. As her wards were for a time under the protection of their father, only Sophia and Mary accompanied their Aunt in this visit. Julius, however, came at his own desire for the last two days of their stay; though the year was declining, and autumn with
his

his mellow pencil had already touched some of the shades under which they wandered. But the sort of taste they had acquired under the tuition of a person who had so true a relish for the beauties of Nature as Mrs. Belmour, now afforded them the greatest pleasure. They rambled either together, or in company with their Aunt, among the deep glades and shadowy thickets of the forest; and Sophia, having made considerable progress in drawing, availed herself of this opportunity of studying, what has not generally been sufficiently attended to, the various forms of trees. Charlotte Amiel, a young woman the near relation of the friend at whose house they were, sometimes accompanied them on these walks. She had been almost self-educated, having lived till very lately, at a very great distance from London, with

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with

with an old and infirm grandmother, where the only advantage she enjoyed was the use of an extensive library. A lively imagination, a great deal of undirected reading, and a warm heart without the slightest knowledge of the world, had made Miss Amiel what is termed romantic; but she was so good-natured, so unaffectedly kind to persons younger than herself, as well as respectful and attentive to those who were older, that she was a general favourite with all; and though Mrs. Belmour was usually averse to her niece's forming any great intimacy, she imagined the cold and sometimes half-repulsive manners of Sophia might be improved by the vivacity so agreeably tempered by simplicity and goodness of heart, which composed the character of Charlotte Amiel.

This

This their new friend, with Sophia and Mary, had one day rambled to a considerable distance from their present abode ; evening was approaching. The declining sun, darting his almost horizontal rays through the under-wood and lighter trees on the skirts of the woods, illuminated the grey boles of the ash, birch, and young beech, and gave to them, retiring in distance amidst the lengthening glooms of the forest, that brilliant relief, which painting sometimes attempts to imitate in vain. The peculiar smells that float in the air in copses, and which arise from the exhalation of innumerable leaves ; the variety of colours those leaves presented, either from the change of season or their native hues ; the low notes of the wood-lark and robin, the last songsters of the year ; and that sort of quiet which
a fine

a fine autumnal evening breathes over every object—all had combined to make the two elder of this trio, Charlotte Amiel and Sophia, forget the hour; while Mary, who had learned to be particularly amused with the native plants of fields and hedges, had strayed to a small distance, collecting such specimens as were yet to be found—though no longer were

——“The wood-lanes strewed
With violets, cowslips, and sweet marygolds * :”
when Sophia, who had been listening to Charlotte’s account of her former life, suddenly looked up, and, observing that the sunny glow she

* The poet who wrote these lines (in an old play) had more fancy than botanical observation. At least, marygolds were never in this country to be found in woods, if some other plant than what we call so be not meant.

had a few moments before remarked had faded, and that night was imperceptibly adding its dark shadows to those of the boughs among which they were wandering, she called to Mary to rejoin them, and to Charlotte expressed her apprehensions that they had already lost their way. She playfully answered in the words of Comus—

Charlotte. “ I know each lane and every alley
“ green,
“ Dingle or bushy dell of this wild
“ wood;
“ And every bosky bourn from side
“ to side,
“ My daily walks.”

Sophia. Yes, my dear Charlotte; but are you so sure you shall know your way when it is dark?

Charlotte. At any time, Sophia. Besides, it is only fancying ourselves like the wandering Lady in Comus,

and we may indulge all sorts of romantic visions.

Mary. But, dear Miss Amiel, consider what sort of visions our poor Aunt, and your good friend Mrs. Boweroak, may have in the mean time.

Charlotte. Oh! they will not be uneasy. I have walked out by myself at all times of the evening, and never was the least alarmed. There is no danger here, I assure you, my little Mary, as there is perhaps in walking late near London: besides, the moon is rising, and will light us home.

Sophia (apart to Charlotte). My dear friend, I would not frighten Mary, but, to tell you the truth, I am most sadly frightened myself; I am sure I saw something move amongst that tuft of wood.

Charlotte

Charlotte (laughing at her fears).
'Tis Comus himself, to be sure; or,
peradventure, some friendly shepherd
coming to protect us wandering vir-
gins from the arch impostor, and
give us

“Some little cheering
“In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs.”

Do you know, Sophia, I have often,
in rambling about this forest, fancied
that it would be vastly delightful for
some of those persons who can afford
private theatricals, as they are called;
to act Comus in such a place as this.
I wish I knew any of those charming
parties; I would propose it, and offer
myself to do the Lady. Listen: I
assure you I do not sing the song
amiss.

Charlotte then sang the first lines
of “Sweet Echo,” in a strong and

sweet voice, but simply, and without any of those ornaments which she would have added, had she been regularly taught. Sophia, whose fear only prevented her receiving pleasure from the romantic gaiety of her friend, just as she ended the line

“ Tell me but where ! ”

would have whispered to her to stop; but in a moment the notes of these words were repeated slowly, and with a more solemn cadence, from a clarinet at some little distance within the forest. It was now Charlotte's turn to be frightened! She listened with her two young friends, in mute amazement not unmingled with dread. Each was afraid of speaking for a moment; and before either of them acquired courage enough to express the
various

various emotions they felt, the notes were heard again still more slowly, but they thought nearer.

Sophia. Oh! dear Miss Amiel! what can it be?—Pray let us hasten home.—Who can it possibly be?

Charlotte (recovering herself). Nobody, certainly, who would hurt us?—A person intending to hurt us would not approach us with music. It is some gentleman, probably, who, tempted like us by the beauty of the evening, has rambled out with his flute or clarinet. We will hasten home, however, as fast as we can; for Mrs. Boweroak certainly would not be pleased if we were to be very much beyond our usual hour of return.

Mary. And I am sure my poor dear Aunt will be terrified as it is; and I am so sorry when her fears for us

make her uneasy, because she is almost always ill after it.

Sophia. Pray, Mary, let us not have any of your affected sentiment, now—I suppose I should be as sorry as you if my Aunt was to be made uneasy. My good Miss Amiel, are you quite sure you are right?

Charlotte. Oh! yes: I believe I am quite sure, yet I do not remember this glade, which seems to be closed at that end with such very thick wood. Mary, pray do not hurry so. Give me, my dear Sophia, a moment's time to consider. If you hurry me so, I shall turn wrong—I question, indeed, if I have not done it already. Softly, sweet girls, I entreat you!—Your fears bewilder me!

Sophia. Did we not come down this green way?

Charlotte.

Charlotte. Yes, I believe so——
Oh! stay—the moon is rising, we
shall know better presently. No, we
are wrong; I am sure we did not pass
those arbeals; I can distinguish them
by their white leaves trembling and
rustling, even little as the wind is,
and by the silver-grey of their stems.
I know where we are; but——be not
frightened, my dear friends, we are
a great way farther from home than I
imagined. I have, somehow or other,
turned wrong.

Mary. Good Heaven! what will be-
come of us? What will my Aunt say?

Sophia. We shall wander all night
about the woods, and my Aunt will be
half distracted to think what is be-
come of us.

Mary. Hush! hush!—I am sure
I heard a noise.

Charlotte. It was only the mur-
muring

muring trembling noise of the aspen leaves—of those arbeals.

Sophia. There it is again—and too loud, I am sure, to be merely the whispering of leaves.

Charlotte. Well, well; but it is only the deer that are sleeping or grazing among the thickets.

Mary. Oh! I almost wish now to hear the music again; for, if we should meet any thing more dreadful!—Robbers lurk about in woods!

Charlotte (impatiently). Pray, child, do not terrify yourself and us so foolishly; you will so perplex me, that I shall never find my way.

Sophia. And we are getting into a thicker and still thicker part of the wood.

Mary. The moon is up, but she will give us no light through these trees.—Oh! I remember, too, that
some-

somebody told me there were wild boars in these great woods.

Charlotte. Wild boars!—Grant me patience!—Don't, my dear Mary, be so nonsensical; it only puzzles me, and does no good.

Sophia. Be quiet, Mary; I thought you boasted mightily of presence of mind.

Mary (clinging closer to her sister, and half whispering). Oh! Sophia, you may scold me if you will, but indeed—indeed I heard an horrible grumbling noise just by us among that black tuft of trees that we must pass: there may be some wild beasts there, a beaver, or a badger, or a——

Charlotte. Now, indeed, Mary, if I had time, I could laugh. Don't you know that there are no wild boars in our forests, nothing but common swine? Perhaps some of them
may

may be straggling about, and what harm will they do you, I wonder? As to beavers, you ought to know there are no such things in England; and if there were, they would not hurt you. They are amphibious animals, and live in the great rivers of America. Come, walk on this way, and never think of such silly fears.

Mary. I must not dispute with you, Miss Amiel; but I'm sure I always thought there were beavers in such places as these, because once, when we were staying with Papa, a great many men and dogs went down to the river to hunt them.

Sophia. No, no; it was an otter, that eats the fish, which they went to hunt—But what signifies it now? Is there not more sense, d'ye think, in trying to find our way, than to talk of beavers and otters?

Charlotte.

Charlotte. Oh! come, I think I now have got into the right path, I can just distinguish it by the moonlight. There is the haunted oak.

Sophia. The haunted oak !

Mary. Oh! good God have pity upon us!—Why, is it haunted?

Charlotte. 'Tis only called so—I know not why—like the Oak of Hern the hunter you remember in Windfor forest, which is mentioned by Shakespeare. There is much such another story about this old tree.

(*Mary shrieks.*) Oh! Heaven have mercy upon us! I saw, indeed I saw a human shape.

Sophia. I thought too I saw something move!—Look! look! There is somebody, or else a spirit coming from among the trees!—And now the moon shines directly through those stems.

stems, and indeed I see a man walking among them.

Charlotte, who had now lost all her courage, in vain attempted, while her terrified companions clung to her, to fly. The shadow continued to move among the trees. They saw him, as now the glancing moon-beams fell on his figure, and were now intercepted by the intervening trees. They slowly, for they trembled too much to make great haste, retreated, looking behind them at every step, clinging close to each other, and each ready to drop with apprehension. At length they heard the footsteps of their pursuer; and now he was separated from them only by bushes and fern, he stepped more hastily on, and, being within a few steps of them, spoke.

Stranger. Who passes there?

Charlotte.

Charlotte. Oh ! Sir—Oh ! I hope,
Sir——

Stranger (approaching nearer). Is
it young ladies I speak to ?

Charlotte. We are at present be-
longing to Mrs. Boweroak's family ;
we have lost our way in our evening
walk, and——

Stranger. And I am afraid I have
frightened you, ladies ?

Charlotte (with courage). A little,
Sir. We are far from home, and we
are afraid our friends will be alarmed
at our being so late—Could you di-
rect us to Eastwood End ?

Stranger. Most willingly ; but I
could first direct you to another house,
where there are those who would be
delighted to see you.

Charlotte (alarmed). No, Sir ; you
must excuse us. It is impossible in-

deed for us to think of entering any other house.

Stranger. Are you aware how far you are from your own?

Charlotte. We cannot be very far off, and the time that we should pass in going to any other house would carry us thither.

All this time the whole party walked on, the stranger leading the way; when suddenly among the deepest shade of the woods a cottage appeared in an almost circular recess. The rays of the moon fell on its white front and reed-thatched roof, and from the low casements streamed the light of candles through the leaves of honeysuckles and broad-leaved myrtle, which luxuriously mantled the windows.——“Here,” said the stranger,

stranger, "is an house, the inhabitants of which have long wished to be known to you, Miss Amiel. Will you now refuse to gratify them?"

Charlotte. Known to me, Sir!—I should be sorry to be ungrateful for their obliging wishes, but indeed I must decline going in. The alarm an unusual absence has occasioned at home, will, I know, be already extreme; and I am by no means easy enough to feel any desire to begin an acquaintance.

Stranger. But, if your kindness does not excite you to oblige me, surely you will yourselves want some refreshment?

All speak. Oh! No, no!

Charlotte. We only beg to be permitted to go home. We will endeavour to find the way, if you can-

not make it convenient to you to conduct us.

Stranger. I give you my word of honour that I will send a servant to wait on you, if you will not deign to accept my services, if you will only wait till I call him. Consider that you have already considerably wandered from the path which brought you to this quarter of the wood, and that it will be extremely difficult for you to regain it by the little light the moon gives among the boughs of the woods. Instead of finding yourselves at the house of Mrs. Boweroak, you may be more inextricably bewildered, and may find yourselves in some less hospitable quarter of the country. Do you recollect that there is a ruffian who subsists, with a large family, on plunder of every sort that comes
in

in his way, and whose hovel is on the skirts of the forest? that he has been known to rob several persons whom he has met late, though he has always taken care not to be known?—And who can tell whether such a marauder might not be tempted to stop so defenceless a party, should he meet you?

Sophia. Oh! Charlotte! what shall we do?

Mary. Indeed, Miss Amiel, I shall die with fear!

Charlotte. Well, Sir, since you are so good as to say you will send a servant with us, (for we can by no means think of giving you the trouble of going yourself) we will wait here till you are so obliging as to call him.—
(*The Stranger leaves them to find a servant.*)

Sophia. I never was so miserable nor so terrified in my whole life!—What shall we do?

Charlotte. Nay, dear Sophia, we can do nothing now but trust ourselves with this servant: there can be no great harm, for the house does not look as if it belonged to any bad people. It certainly is a beautiful little place; and if I was not aware how improper it is to make acquaintance without the permission of those under whose care we are, I should not much scruple going in.

The door of the house now suddenly opened, and two very genteel-looking women appeared at it, attended by a servant with a light. They approached the alarmed wanderers; and the elder, addressing herself to Miss Amiel, said,

“ I un-

“I understand it is Miss Amiel I have the pleasure of speaking to. Will you allow me to hope my solicitations may be better received than my son's, and that you will walk in for a moment? The lady then added, that her name was Airsley. Charlotte immediately recollected that she had heard the name, and that it was borne by the widow of an admiral who had an house on the Forest, though she had never happened to have seen it before. Their fears of making an improper acquaintance thus at an end, the three young friends, who, between fear and fatigue, were in reality almost disabled from reaching their own home, consented to accept the hospitable invitation. They expressed, however, so much apprehension of the alarm their absence would occasion to Mrs.

Belmour

Belmour and Mrs. Boweroak, that, after they had a moment reposed themselves, and taken each a slight refreshment, the stranger, who was the youngest of Mrs. Airsley's sons, conducted them home. They were, however, introduced to an elder brother, and his wife, a young person remarkably beautiful, who, even during the short time they were in the room, attracted much of their attention, though she never spoke. As they returned towards home their new acquaintance rallied them as well on their fears as their mistrust of him; which was, says he, I own, extremely proper, for my frolic, perhaps, was impertinent and ill-judged.

Charlotte. Your frolic?

Mr. Airsley. Yes; I was rambling about the Forest, which is my custom of a fine evening, during the now
short

short and rare recess I enjoy from the duties of my profession, and I heard you, madam, sing part of a very favourite air. I was so inconsiderate as not to be aware, that my repeating with my clarinet, which I happened to have with me, the last notes after the pause you made, would rather alarm you, than encourage, what I was eagerly desirous of hearing, the close of the song. I soon found that my indiscretion brought with it its own punishment, and that I had terrified you into silence. I followed your subsequent wanderings through the wood at no great distance, and caught now and then a sentence, which convinced me you had lost your way, and were at length even under great apprehensions. I then ventured to speak to you; and I trust you will not think me too selfish, when

when I say, that I can hardly regret the little alarm you have suffered, if it is the fortunate occasion of my mother's and Mrs. Edward Airsley's forming an acquaintance so desirable.

Charlotte. That young lady then with your mother is Mrs. Edward Airsley?

Mr. Airsley. Yes, my brother's wife. Perhaps, if you have very strong national dislikes, you may object to her society; for she is not an English woman, nor even a European.

Charlotte. I do not understand you, Sir.

Mr. Airsley. My sister-in-law is a Turk.

Sophia. A Turk?—How is that possible?

Mr. Airsley. My brother brought her from the Archipelago, with my assistance.

assistance. I assure you I boast a little of my knight-errantry, for the service was somewhat perilous.

Charlotte. I should like extremely to hear an account of it.

Mr. Airsley. And I should like vastly to give you the account.

Charlotte. Oh! we must not attempt it now, for we are already so late!—But I am sure Mrs. Boweroak will be happy to be known to your mother, and we shall have some other opportunity.

On their arrival at the house, the young party found the elder ladies under less alarm than they had themselves apprehended; for, as it was possible they had gone to the house of a friend, and Mrs. Boweroak was of a sanguine temper, and not subject to needless fears, she had checked the apprehensions of her friend. Miss

Amiel

Amiel gave a brief account of the cause of their long absence, without naming the musician, who had undoubtedly contributed to lead them out of their way. Mr. Airsley, however, was introduced, as having met them in the Forest, and kindly conducted them home; and, after a short conversation, Mrs. Belmour discovered that his mother was a very old acquaintance, and one whom she should on every account be rejoiced to see again.

In consequence then of this accidental meeting, which they soon learned to think extremely fortunate, an intimacy arose between the families. The fair Turk was the admiration of all who saw her, as well on account of her personal beauty, as for the sweetness of her temper and manners, and her tender attachment

to her husband and his family. The story of her departure from her own country her brother-in-law communicated to their new acquaintance, by her permission, in these words:

“The fair Zulmine is a native of Circassia; she was one of those infants that are bought every year by merchants, who make their fortunes by purchasing slaves for the markets of Constantinople. She was only seven years old when she was sold to Azapheth, a Sadar or Commander of the Janizaries. He was not only a foldier, but a man of so superior an understanding, that he was employed by the Porte to negotiate I know not what business at Zante. There he had been some months, when he directed Zelmahide, his favourite, and Zulmine, whom he had hardly yet seen, for she had been merely in a course of

VOL. II. P education

education in his house, to be brought to him. My brother, Captain Henry Airsley, was then on his second cruise, which he was ordered to continue for some months among the islands of the Archipelago. It was his fortune to fall in with two large French privateers: one of them he took, and found on board the two ladies of the Sadar, at that time resident at Zante, whom it was certain their French captors had no inclination to take to the Turk, who expected them. They were, indeed, at the time my brother met them, making the best of their way to Marseilles with their prize.

Zelmahide, who had two infant children with her, would have been in despair at the unfortunate situation in which she found herself, if her dread of the ascendancy Zulmine might acquire over her husband had not been
greater

greater than her fears for the loss of her liberty, or even her life. She looked forward to the estrangement of Azapheth as certain. She had herself been the almost unrivalled mistress of his heart for six years, but it had never been contested by so formidable a competitor as Zulmine—Zulmine, who was so far from being solicitous to make this conquest, that she dreaded nothing so much as the presence of a man whom she could not consider otherwise than as her tyrant.

The last captor of these ladies treated them with the greatest respect, yet did not so far yield to the absurd customs of their country as to deny himself the pleasure of conversing with them, and Zelmahide soon saw, that it would be with extreme reluctance Captain Airsley would relinquish his fair captive; while Zulmine was by

no means insensible of the personal merits and generous attention of the young Englishman. Their voyage drew towards a close; for my brother was under the necessity of carrying his prize into Zante, which was then the rendezvous of the Squadron he belonged to; and Zelmahide, conscious that there was no time to be lost, ventured to disclose to Edward her sentiments. This she did with considerable art, endeavouring to prevail upon him to put her and her children on shore, and to sail for England with Zulmine: and it was in vain Edward attempted to convince her, that neither his honour nor the rules of the service would permit him to do this. Zelmahide now reproached and now implored; but honour and duty strongly resisted her importunity. The silent and modest eloquence

quence of the young and lovely Zulmine was infinitely more persuasive, and might, perhaps, have been too powerful for every objection, but that it was already known who were on board the *Antiopa* (my brother's ship, in which I was a midshipman, was so called), and the commander of the squadron had begun a treaty with Azapheth, for the ransom of Zelmahide, Zulmine, his two children, and the slaves that belonged to them.

Zulmine left the vessel, drowned in tears, to attend Zelmahide, who dreaded her attractions, to the Haram of a man whom she thought of with horror and disgust. My brother, the victim of honour, saw even the reputation of an honourable action torn from him, and he so highly resented the conduct of his commanding officer, that he determined to take the

earliest occasion of calling him to an account.—We were soon to leave that port, and, soon after, those seas. My brother, despair and rage in his heart, attempted vainly to conquer the pain he felt, by a more sedulous application to his duty. He could not bear to go on shore, whither I was sent with a party to procure stores for our ship. Engaged for two or three days in this occupation, I at length was told by a sailor, who accompanied me, that a black slave had constantly followed me whenever I was in the market, and certainly had some design in it. I feared nothing from such a person; and the next day, the man being pointed out to me, I accosted him. He bade me, in bad French, follow him out of the way of observation; and then told me, that he came from Zelmahide, who, if I had cou-
rage

rage to hazard it, had found the means, with the consent of Zulmine, to put her into my hands: there was some danger, he said, in the exploit, to those within the Haram, but little to whoever should receive the fair Zulmine without. I hesitated not a moment: I knew my brother's attachment to the beautiful Turk, and how much it had cost him to relinquish her. I caused the boat to be ready, which had before been employed in carrying our sea stock on board; and at midnight I was to be under the walls of the house inhabited by the Sadar. I was to take with me an European dress, and wait, with two men well armed, the signal which the black slave assured me he would give. I was punctual to my appointment, with two brave fellows on whom I could depend; and exactly at the
time

time we had agreed upon the signal was made, and a door opened not far from us, from which the negro appeared, and beckoned to us to follow him. I doubted, for a moment, whether we were not betrayed to the vengeance of the jealous Sadar: but it was no time for pusillanimous hesitation; we drew our sabres, and, concealing them, entered the garden. Our guide walked silently before us, till we came among a group of cypresses and cedar trees, so thick that no light penetrated among their boughs. Zelmahide and her trembling friend, now no longer her dreaded rival, waited for us. The former asked eagerly for the clothes we had brought; which having received, and retiring from our sight with Zulmine, she soon returned, and delivered into our care a beautiful boy of thirteen or fourteen,

teen, for such Zulmine now appeared. A small packet of her own clothes was then given to one of my men, and Zelmahide hurried from us, imploring us to lose no time, but to fly as silently as we could, and hasten to embark. I know not if her terror, or that of our timid companion, was the greatest: we regained the door, and hastened towards our boat; but before we were within hearing of the men whom we had left to guard it, a shot was fired after us: and at the same moment one of the boat's crew met us, and informed us that a party, whom they knew to be the Sadar's people, waited in considerable force to intercept our return.

My trembling charge, who too well understood the cause of our alarm, was now fainting in my arms. There was not a moment for debate: I knew
that

that a well-managed retreat alone could save us, and I instantly determined upon it. I bade the strongest of my attendants take Zulmine in his arms, and we made our way to an house of public entertainment which I had been used to frequent, where I told the Venetian who kept it, that the young midshipman, for as such I was desirous Zulmine should pass, had been hurt by an accident, and that a few hours repose were necessary. At the same time I related, that the poor boy had disobliged his commander by a youthful indiscretion, and that I wished to keep him on shore till I could appease my brother's anger. The cunning Italian was not to be so imposed upon: he came to me soon after, and spoke thus—"Sir, I know that the person you would pass upon me for the junior officer of an
English

English ship is a Turkish lady, whom you have stolen from the Haram of the Sadar." He saw my surprise and vexation.—"It is no matter," continued he, "how I have discovered this; I have no intention of betraying you; on the contrary, my natural detestation of the Turks would engage me to assist you, if I had not a great affection for the English: but there are impediments to your getting your prize safe on board, which it will be impossible for you to surmount without my assistance."—I found the man wanted money, and I gave him all I had, with promises of more. He then convinced me that the danger was by no means imaginary; and, in the true spirit of Venetian contrivance, engaged to deliver us from it, and to conduct the lovely fugitive safe on board the *Antiopa*, if I would leave
the

the management of the whole to him.

Accordingly he caused a long and large basket to be brought into his house, such as vegetables and fruit are conveyed to market in; and early in the morning poor Zulmine being deprived of her newly-worn uniform, and wrapt in a light dress of her own, was deposited on a bed of leaves within this basket: she was then covered as lightly as possible with vegetables and the whole shadowed with boughs of cedar and plantain, as if to secure the fruit from the heat of the sun during their passage to the ship. Two other baskets were furnished in the same way; and then every thing being ready, my men, and others provided by the Venetian, were directed to carry them to the boats as sea stock for the English ships, which

2

were

were on the point of leaving the harbour.

The precious cargo contained in the first basket was consigned to the care of my brave comrades, and I at length saw it safely deposited in the boat, though the shore was lined with parties of Turks, who were, I knew, the people of the Sadar, and who waited on purpose to intercept Zulmine.

Imagine what was my joy to see her safely on board; yet, even there, great precaution was necessary. My brother was at variance with the commodore, and it was certain that he would try to compel him to relinquish Zulmine, should he know of her being in the Antiopa. The people, in general, loved their captain with great affection; but to leave as little as possible to chance, the steward and clerk were let into the secret, and

Zulmine was conveyed into the captain's cabin in her vegetable cradle, even before her lover knew she was in his ship.

It would not be easy to describe the mingled emotions which we all felt while the covering, under which the poor fugitive had remained almost four hours, was removed. She had suffered considerably from heat and confinement, but in a few days was perfectly recovered, and resumed her accustomed loveliness. My brother and she were united, as soon as they arrived at an English port; and the fair Turk was instructed in the Christian religion and soon after baptized, though still retaining her former name. They have since enjoyed the most perfect felicity, during the short intervals of the service which my brother is allowed. About three months ago,

ago, he prevailed on my mother to accompany Zulmine, who is now fixed in the cottage of the forest, and where our general happiness (for my mother dotes on her daughter-in-law) can hardly admit of any addition, though our short-lived pleasures on shore will be greatly increased by the acquaintance we have now made.

Thus ended Mr. Airsley's little narrative; but the adventure of the young party was the subject of some days' conversation, and of a slight reproof.

Julius, who arrived a day or two afterwards to return with them to Southampton, was, of course, told of their little night ramble, and the story of the fair Zulmine was related to him. Many questions occurred from a sensible and intelligent boy, as to the manners so different from those of his

country, which were represented in this story.

Julius. I should imagine that a Turk must be a very unhappy fellow. What can a man do with himself who never reads, or hunts, or has the amusements such as we have?

Mrs. Belmour. Your inquiry is very natural. They are so sensible of the tedium of life that they take opiate to obtain a sort of temporary insensibility. Their government, which is despotic, does not allow any printing presses within its dominion, and of course the means that have enlightened the rest of the world are lost to them. Their religion teaches them to look with abhorrence on Christians, and I am sorry to say, that, in too many instances, Christians act so as to justify in a great degree their aversion.

Julius.

Julius. The Arabian Nights are founded on Turkish manners—but they are very improbable.

Mrs. Belmour. Many people are highly delighted with those wild histories, but I cannot say I could ever admire them. I see no moral in them, and what I cannot for a moment believe as a narrative, while it leaves no moral impression on my mind, does not at all interest me.

Mary. I don't feel much delight in hearing about pearls as big as eggs, and rubies as big as melons. I think it a great deal more delightful to read histories that are true, or like truth, and descriptions resembling what one sees every day.

Mrs. Belmour. Such for example as a forest, where young ladies lose themselves, or meadows with shepherds and shepherdesses.

Sophia. That puts me in mind of a sonnet which Charlotte gave me yesterday.

Mrs. Belmour. What does it relate to?—Can you repeat it?

Sophia. It is addressed to the New Forest, which is called Sonnet to Ytene.

Mrs. Belmour. Ytene is the name given in the old records to the tract now called the New Forest.—But come, let us have the verses—I suppose you have Miss Amiel's leave to read them to your friend?

Sophia. Oh! yes; she told me she had no objection.

SONNET TO THE FOREST YTENE.

Along thy wood-lanes wild, or shrubby lawns,
Or hollow dells, or glens befringed with thorn;
Where from its ferny lair, at early morn,
The forester alarms the timid fawn,

I would

I would 'twere mine to wander ;—or when fade
The gleams of evening into shadowy night :
What time on many a stem or grassy blade
The glow-worm hangs her fairy emerald light,
I would behold the moon-beams fall among
The far retiring trees, and lengthening glades,
And listen the low wind, that thro' the shades
Conveys the night bird's soft love-laboured song :
For here the soul unruffled feels its powers,
And seeks the Hermit Peace within his forest
bowers.

After the family of Mr. Airsley left the neighbourhood of Southampton, the beautiful and amiable Zulmine was happy to supply the deficiencies of her education by frequent visits to the studious circle at Mrs. Belmour's; and those who composed it, were in their turn delighted to hear from her accounts of the people and places she had seen, so unlike what they had been accustomed to; while the mildness of her manners and the softness
of

of her heart seemed to convince them that sense and goodness may be the product of every part of the world. About two years after their ramble in the forest had so unexpectedly enlarged their acquaintance, Miss Amiel was married to Mr. Charles Ainsley, then made a commander; and Sophia, frequently a visitor, delighted to talk over the circumstances of their first accidental meeting.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

This Work having met with the success that has attended the former Productions of the Author in this line, Two other Volumes on the same Plan, as a continuation, are preparing.

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